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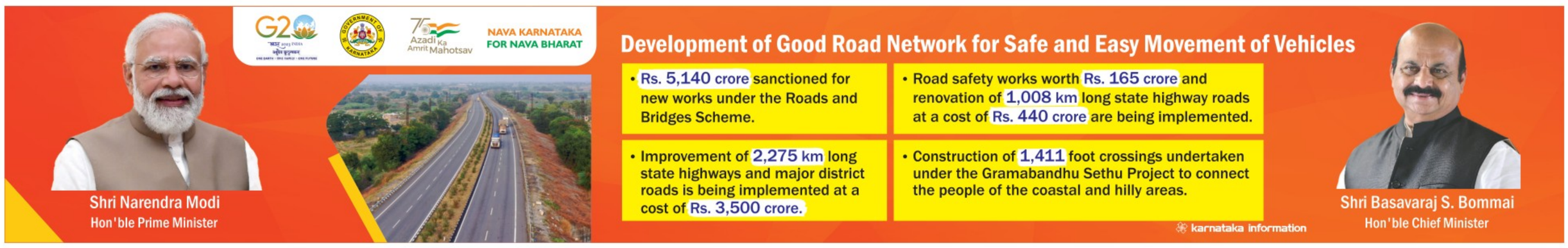

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The bar for normality is much higher now, since the loss of trust post-2020

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UBS to take over Credit Suisse to contain crisis

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Cong. should decide its role in Opposition front, says Akhilesh

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday said that several regional parties were making attempts to forge an alliance ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election, and the Congress should decide what role it would play in such a grouping.

"Several regional parties and a few other parties are trying to forge an alliance or a front. [West Bengal Chief Minister] Mamata Banerjee is also making attempts in that direction; so are Chief Minister of Telangana (K. Chandrasekhar Rao) and Bihar Chief Minister (Nitish Kumar). Congress should decide its own role. Congress is a national party and we are regional parties," Mr. Yadav said.

At the conclusion of the national executive meeting of his party, the SP leader said the formula of the front was to defeat the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the election.

Mr. Yadav's recent stand of maintaining equal distance from the BJP and the Congress was in consonance with the Trinamool Congress's stand of not allying with the Congress before Lok Sabha polls.

Mr. Yadav met Ms. Banerjee at her residence on Friday.

'Agencies misused'

During the press conference, Mr. Yadav criticised the BJP government at the Centre for misuse of Central agencies, and added that the BJP would be politically finished, "just like the Congress", for the same reason.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

Amritpal elusive, police arrest 34 more followers

Mobile Internet services will remain suspended to prevent incitement to violence; four arrested aides taken to an Assam jail for security reasons

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The Punjab Police stepped up its manhunt for pro-Khalistan preacher Amritpal Singh on Sunday, with multiple teams raiding several locations, leading to the arrest of 34 more of his associates and the seizure of the vehicle he allegedly used while escaping from the police on Saturday.

Two fresh cases were registered against the radical preacher and his associates following his escape from the police dragnet and the seizure of illegal weapons from his organisation Waris Punjab De (WPD).

According to a statement released by the police late in the evening, 34 more WPD elements were held on Sunday, taking the total number of arrests to 112.

The police spokesperson said that during the ongoing search operations, an abandoned vehicle bearing registration number PB10FW 6797 was found at Salina village in Mehatpur of Jalandhar Rural. "The said vehicle was used by fugitive Amritpal while police were on chase. A .315-bore rifle along with 57 live cartridges, a sword and a walkie-talkie set [have] been seized from the abandoned vehicle," he said, adding that the vehicle's owner, Manpreet Singh, was arrested. The ban on mobile Internet services across the State was extended till Monday noon to prevent any incitement to violence by his supporters.

Warning of strict action against spreading fake news, rumours and hate speech, the spokesperson said: "All citizens, media persons and social media platform intermediaries are requested to act in a responsible manner and to fact-check the authenticity of the content being shared by them on various social media, electronic media and print media platforms."

Four of Mr. Singh's aides were taken to Dibrugarh, Assam by an Air Force flight.

Punjab Police personnel near the residence of 'Waris Punjab De' chief Amritpal Singh, about 45 km from Amritsar, on Sunday. AFP

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

NEARBY

Auto services likely to be hit

BENGALURU
Autorickshaw services in the city are likely to be affected on Monday as over 20 auto drivers' unions have decided to observe a 24-hour strike from midnight on Sunday. » Page 2

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

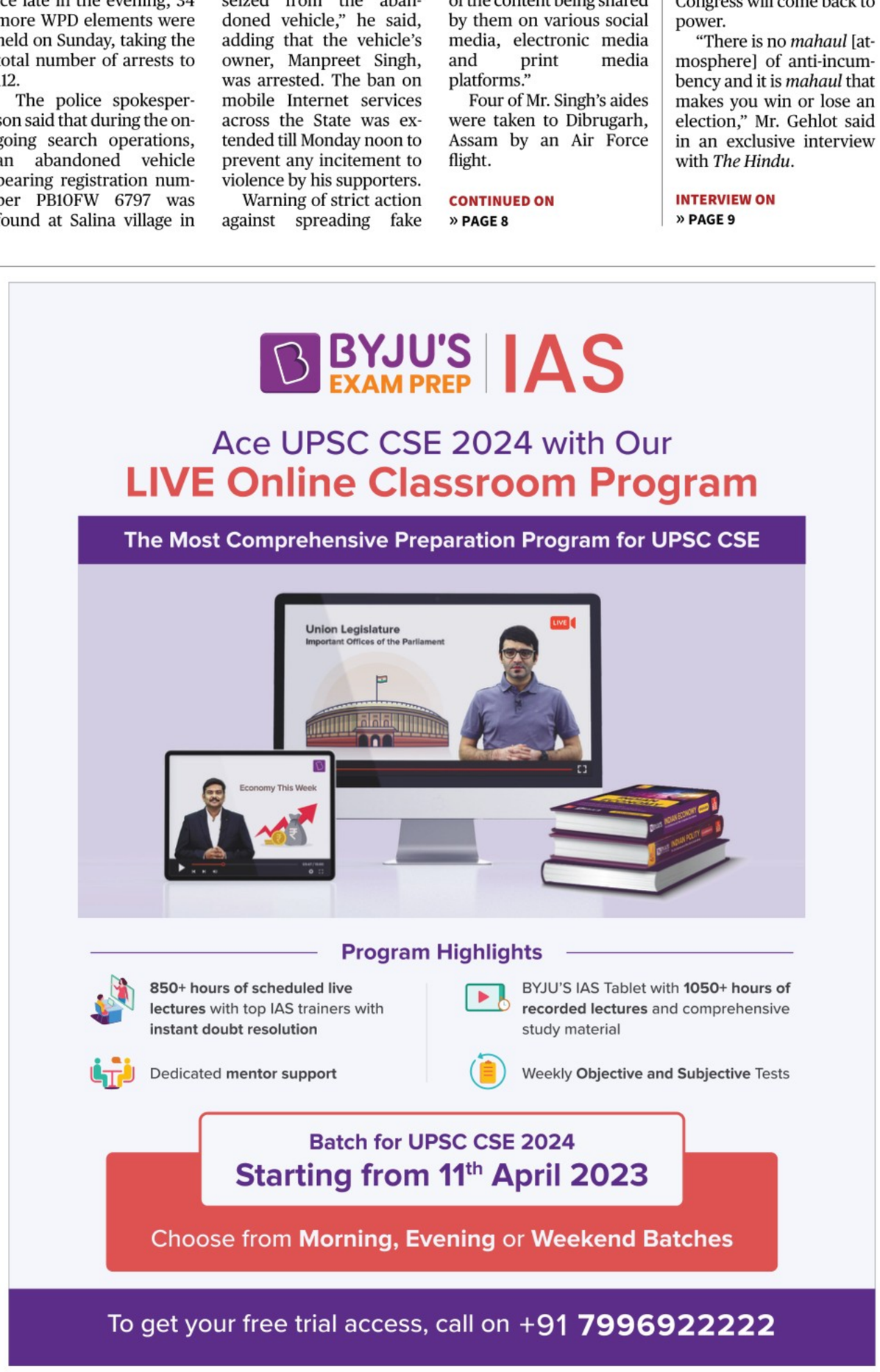
Rajasthan voter mood on Cong. side: Gehlot

Varghese K. George
Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

Amid an ongoing leadership tussle, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot says the public mood in the State indicates that the Congress will come back to power.

"There is no *mahaul* [atmosphere] of anti-incumbency and it is *mahaul* that makes you win or lose an election," Mr. Gehlot said in an exclusive interview with *The Hindu*.

INTERVIEW ON » PAGE 9



Text&Context

THE HINDU

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Access to facilities and basic IT skills

A recently released study titled "Multiple Indicator Survey (MIS) - NSS 78th Round Report" conducted between 2020 and 2021, showed that in India around 33% had to walk outside premises for drinking water, and a similar share was using unclean fuel to cook food. The survey results also showed that only 5% households had access to air conditioners and similar share can use basic formula in spreadsheets. By **The Hindu Data Team**

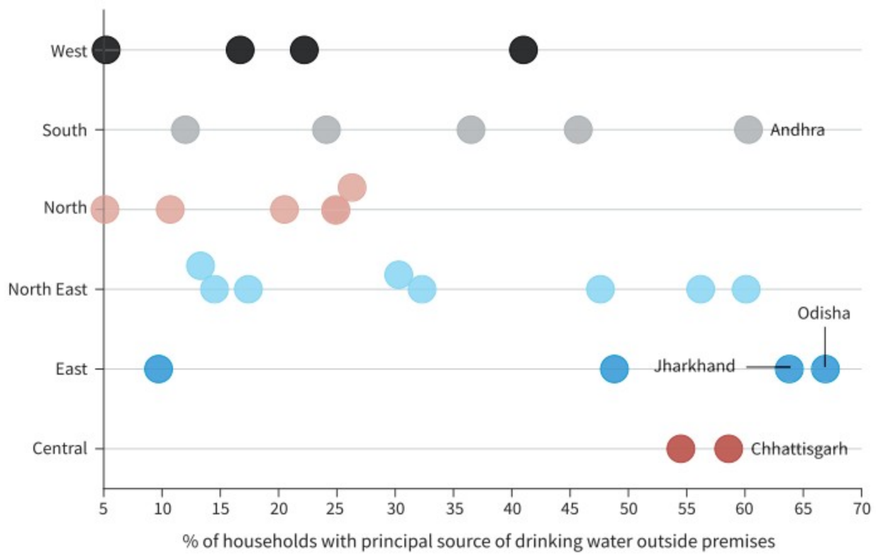
Distance to water

Over a third of households in India had their principal source of drinking outside their premises. In rural India, fetching water is a task almost exclusively performed by women. The greater the distance to the primary source of water, the more they will be exposed to heat stress on a hot day. In seven States more than 50% of households reported that their drinking water source was located outside the premise with Odisha having the largest share (66.9%) of such households followed by Jharkhand (63.8%)

% OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF DRINKING WATER OUTSIDE PREMISES (INDIA)

33.7%

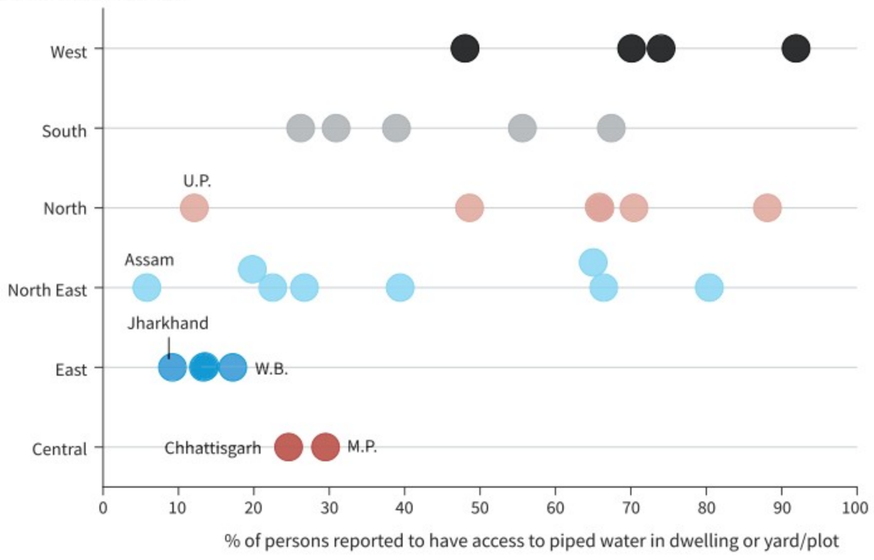
STATE-WISE FIGURES



% OF PERSONS REPORTED TO HAVE ACCESS TO PIPED WATER IN DWELLING OR YARD/PLOT (INDIA)

35.5%

STATE-WISE FIGURES



Piped water

Just over 35% of persons in India had access to piped water in their dwellings. Among States, access to piped water inside dwelling/yard/plot ranged from over 90% in Goa to close to 6% in Assam. In as many as 12 States less than 30% of persons had access to piped water and most of them were in the eastern and northeastern regions. Assam, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha reported the lowest share of persons with piped water in their dwellings

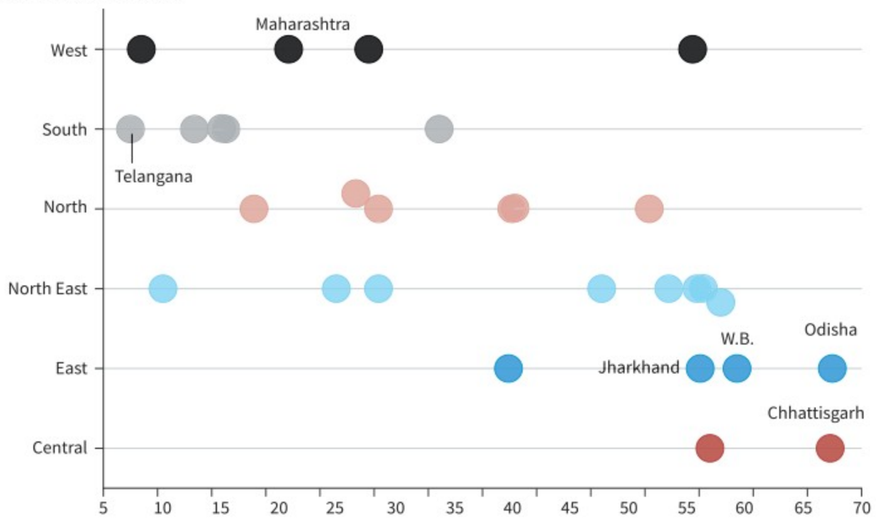
Unclean fuel

Over 33% of households in India used firewood, chips and crop residue as the primary source of fuel for cooking. Many southern States reported the lowest share of such households, while many eastern and central States, reported the highest share. Even as fuel prices increased, the government withdrew support for LPG subsidies, likely forcing more households to revert to biomass-fuelled stoves called chulhas, which expose women who cook to soot and other harmful particulate matter

% OF HOUSEHOLDS WHICH USE FIREWOOD/CHIPS/CROP RESIDUE TO COOK (INDIA)

33.8%

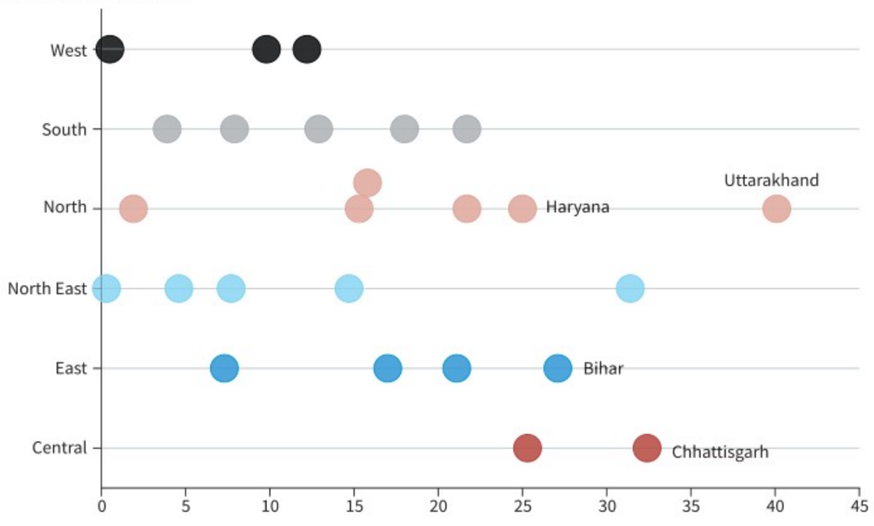
STATE-WISE FIGURES

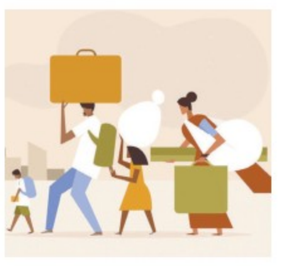


% OF PERSONS WILLING TO MOVE IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT (INDIA)

13.7%

STATE-WISE FIGURES





In search of jobs

For about 13.7% of the persons who were willing to move out from their present place of residence in India, the main reason was the "search for employment." Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland and Bihar had the highest share of persons who were willing to move out in search of employment. Nine States including Maharashtra, West Bengal, Kerala and Gujarat had less than 10% persons willing to move out to search for employment

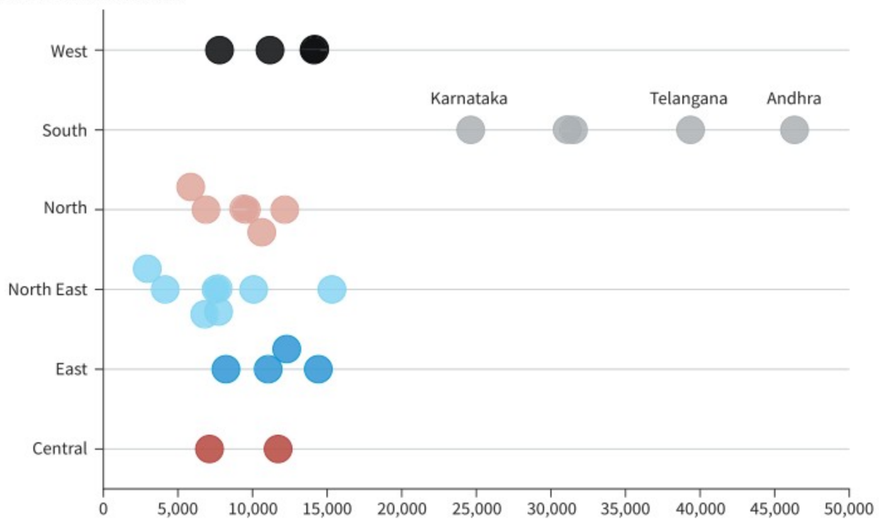
Persons in debt

In India, over 15,000 persons per lakh were indebted to some institutional/non-institutional agency as of 2020-21. Southern States stood out when it came to indebtedness with Andhra Pradesh having the highest number of indebted persons per lakh (46,330), followed by Telangana (39,358), Kerala (31,510) and Tamil Nadu (31,085). North eastern States such as Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland had the lowest number of persons indebted per lakh

ADULTS PER LAKH WHO WERE INDEBTED TO ANY INSTITUTIONAL/ NON-INSTITUTIONAL AGENCY

15,809

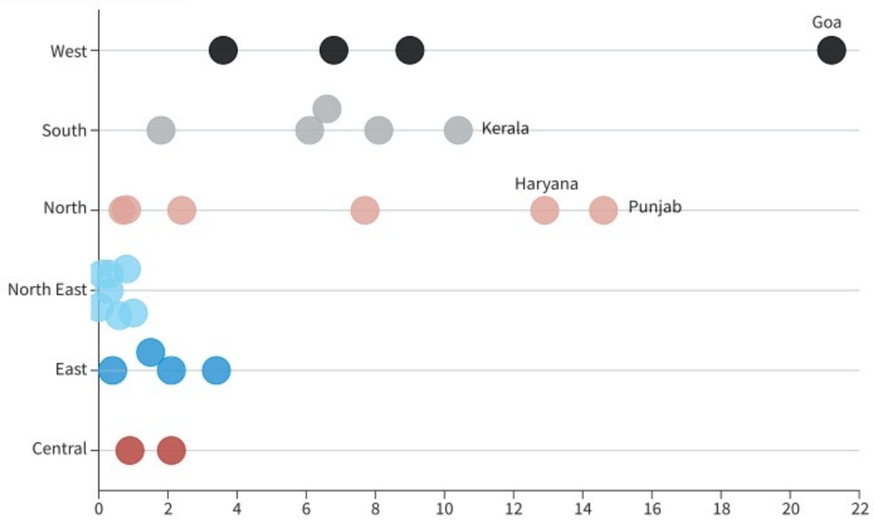
STATE-WISE FIGURES

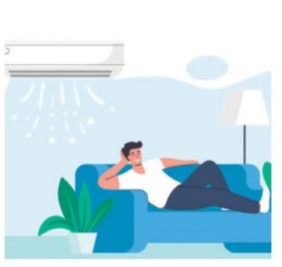


PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS REPORTING POSSESSION OF AIR CONDITIONER

4.9%

STATE-WISE FIGURES





A/C possession

Close to 5% of households in India possessed air conditioners. In Kerala, Punjab, Haryana and Goa more than 10% of households had A/Cs. Finding accessible ways to stay cool during heat waves — which are likely to become more frequent and intense over India — is paramount to avoid heat-related injuries and death. One way is A/Cs. India is expected to have a billion ACs by 2050, which throws these machines' energy ratings into the spotlight

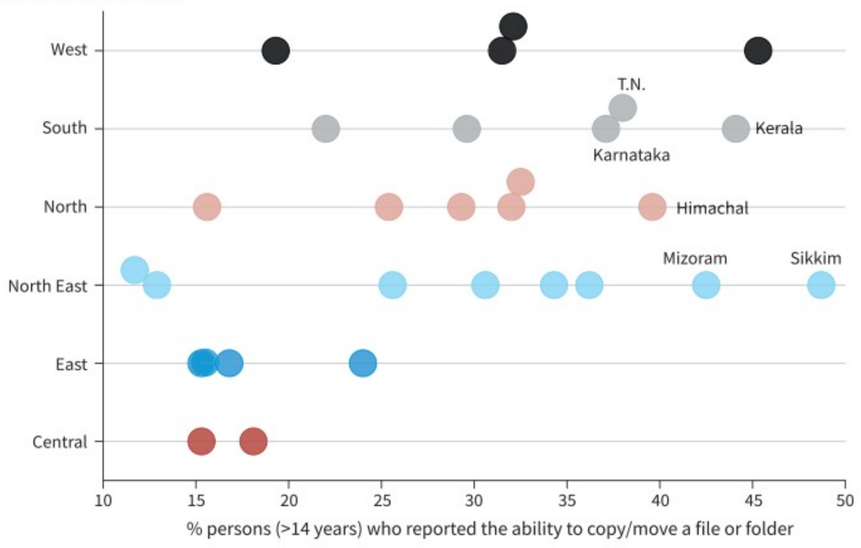
Copying & moving

Close to 25% of Indians had the ability to copy/move a file or folder. Among major States, Kerala, Himachal, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka reported a higher share of persons who had the ability to move and copy files. In nine States, in the eastern and northeastern regions, less than 20% of persons possessed the ability. The chart shows the share of persons aged 15 years and above who had the ability to copy/move a file or folder

% PERSONS (>14 YEARS) WHO REPORTED THE ABILITY TO COPY/MOVE A FILE OR FOLDER

24.6%

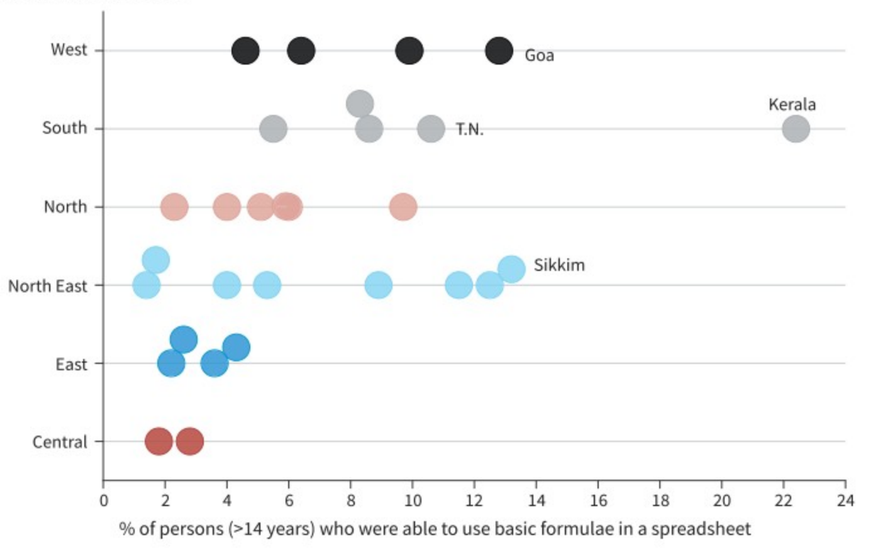
STATE-WISE FIGURES



% OF PERSONS (>14 YEARS) WHO WERE ABLE TO USE BASIC FORMULAE IN A SPREADSHEET

5.9%

STATE-WISE FIGURES



Spreadsheet skills

Close to 6% of Indians over 15 years of age had the ability to use basic arithmetic formulae in a spreadsheet. Kerala had the highest share of such persons (22.4) in the country with Sikkim being a distant second (13.2). In as many as 23 States less than 10% of persons could use formulae in spreadsheets with several northeastern and eastern States having the lowest share

To avoid toll plaza, bus driver takes wrong way and hits bike; rider dies

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The KSRTC bus involved in the accident on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Attempting to avoid the toll plaza, a Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) driver drove the bus in the wrong direction and hit a bike on Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway near Kumbalgodu on Sunday morning. The rider died on the spot while the pillion rider was injured.

The deceased has been identified as Siddappa, an employee of a private company. The pillion rider has been admitted to a private hospital. The Kumbalgodu police said the accident occurred owing to the driver's negligent and rash driving.

An official of the KSRTC said, "It was a Mysuru-bound bus. After crossing NICE Road Junction, the driver used the flyover of the expressway to reach Bidadi. After getting down from the flyover near the Toll Gate, he found out that access provided from the main carriage to the service was closed. Instead of entering the plaza, he decided to take a U-turn and drove the vehicle in the opposite direction. After driving for almost 1 km, the bus was involved in a fatal accident."

The official said two days ago, access from the main carriage to the service road near Christ University was closed and the driver was unaware of that. "He assumed the service road could be accessed just before the toll. After seeing it closed, he decided to return in the wrong direction. The accident happened on the flyover."

The official said KSRTC had given instructions to ordinary bus drivers not to take the main carriage of the expressway and use service roads instead. "We have asked only non-stop services and premier services to take the main carriage of the expressway."

Commercial operations on K.R. Puram to Whitefield line to start from March 26

On March 25, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 13 km Namma Metro line

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Finishing works are under way on the K.R. Puram to Whitefield line. The BMRCL has deployed around 1,400 workers to complete the task. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The much awaited K.R.Puram -Whitefield Namma Metro line will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 25. The commercial operations will start the next day. The line is part of the extended purple line from Baiyappanahalli to Whitefield, built under phase II of the Namma Metro project. The total length of the extended purple line is 15 km.

In the first stage, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is opening the K.R. Puram to Whitefield line. The distance between two destinations is around 13 km. The remaining stretch from K.R. Puram to Baiyappanahalli is likely to be opened mid-year after completing the open web girder construction and other works over a railway track near Benniganahalli.

It is said that after inaugurating the metro line by flagging off a train, the Prime Minister is likely to travel the new line in a train. Officials say Narendra Modi is the first PM to inaugurate Namma Metro service in Bengaluru. "Earlier, when Manmohan Singh was PM, he laid the foundation for the Namma Metro project from M.G.Road to Baiyappanahalli under Phase I . Over the years, most of the inaugurations of metro reaches were done by Union Ministers. In 2017, then President Pranab Mukherjee had inaugurated the underground stretch of Namma Metro built under Phase I. On March 25, for the first time, the Prime Minister will be inaugurating the metro services in Bengaluru."

Mr. Modi and his Cabinet colleagues are making frequent visits to the poll-bound State for inaugurating or laying foundation stone for various projects. On March 12, he inaugurated the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway project.

₹4,500 crore

The BMRCL has spent close to ₹4,500 crore to build the K.R. Puram to Whitefield line. A total of 12 stations have come up on this stretch. An official of the BMRCL said, "The BMRCL has spent around ₹5,000 crore on building an extended metro line from Baiyappanahalli to Whitefield under Phase II. The 13-km line, which is also set to be inaugurated, cost close to ₹4,500 crore for civil construction, land acquisition, traction, signaling and others." In the past, BMRCL missed several deadlines to open the line.

2.5 to 3 lakh passengers

The BMRCL has estimated that opening of the line would benefit 2.5 lakh to 3 lakh passengers every day. "Metro services till Whitefield will benefit lakhs of people including professionals working in hundreds of companies located in the area. For the benefit of passengers, we have requested the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) to run an adequate number of feeder services from S.V. Road to K.R. Puram metro station. At S.V. Road metro station, bus bays are available to run feeder services. Those who are planning to travel from K.R. Puram to Whitefield, can get down at S.V. Road and board a city bus to reach the K.R. Puram station," said the official. The distance between two metro stations is 5 km.

The BMRCL has deployed five sets of trains between K.R. Puram and Whitefield. The frequency of the trains would be around 10 minutes. Travel time between two destinations is 23 minutes. The BMRCL recently received authorization from the Commissioner of Metro Railway Safety (CMRS) to open the line for the general public.

Auto services may be hit owing to strike

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Riders from Bike Taxi Association of Bengaluru, staging a silent peaceful protest at Freedom Park, condemning the attacks on bike taxi riders, and other issues, in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

A driver showing a placard in support of autos going on strike in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Autorickshaw services in the city are likely to be affected as over 20 auto drivers' unions, under the banner of Bangalore Auto Drivers Unions' Federation, have decided to observe a 24-hour strike with effect from midnight on Sunday.

The federation has been demanding that the State government ban bike taxi services offered by mobile app-based aggregators in the city. Drivers allege that aggregators are providing "illegal "bike taxi services without obtaining any license from the Transport Department and attaching white boards two-wheelers (meant for personal use) by luring the youth. Drivers allege that in the city for decades, lakhs of families rely on income generated by running autorickshaws and the illegal bike taxi business is eating into their revenue.

M. Manjunath of the Adarsha Auto and Taxi Drivers' Union said, "In the city, there are around 2.2 lakh autos. We have been running autos by obtaining permits from the Transport Department. On other hand, the department has allowed the aggregators to provide bike taxi services without any license. Because of this, drivers are suffering in the city. We want the State government to initiate action against the aggregators running illegal businesses. Already many governments in Maharashtra, Delhi and others have imposed a ban, we want Karnataka to do the same to protect the interest of auto drivers." Mr. Manjunath said that 21 auto drivers unions in the city are supporting the strike call.

On Monday, drivers will submit a memorandum to the Chief Minister demanding an immediate ban on bike taxis after taking out a rally from KSR Bengaluru Railway station to the official residence of CM on Race Course Road.

On the demands of auto drivers, Transport Commissioner S.N. Siddaramappa had said, "The issue related to aggregators is pending before the Karnataka High Court. The court had earlier directed the department not to take any coercive action."

Bike taxi riders protest

Meanwhile, those who have attached two-wheelers with aggregators staged a protest at Freedom Park against harassment by auto drivers.

Sandeep (name changed), a bike taxi rider, said, "It has been five years that I have been earning my livelihood by riding a bike taxi. Like me, there are thousands of people who have attached their bikes to the aggregators. We often become targets of auto drivers for riding bike taxis. If the bike taxi business is illegal, the departments concerned should take action against the service providers. Why are the auto drivers targeting us? We too have families like them. There are many instances of autorickshaw drivers harassing bike taxi riders by snatching their mobiles and destroying their helmets. These kinds of harassment should stop."

Nigerian man arrested for peddling drugs

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Jayanagar police unearthed a drug racket and arrested a Nigerian national who was trying to sell synthetic drugs to his clients on Sunday.

Based on a tip-off, a team of police rushed to a playground in Jayanagar 5th block and caught Iloso, 35. They recovered cocaine and MDMA pills worth ₹11.5 lakh from the accused. They have also impounded a scooter used by him.

Lack of travel documents

The police said that he was caught while he was waiting for his clients. The accused did not have any valid travel documents with him. The police have registered a case under NDPS Act, 1985, and are investigating to ascertain the source of drugs.

Luxury car and bike rally

Participants gear up to ride their motorcycles during a luxury car and bike rally organised by Queen's Drive Club, in Bengaluru, on Sunday. PTI

THE HINDU
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I Vedaant Venkatraman S/O, Venkatraman Krishaswami R/o F3b, Monarch Manor Eeshwara Layout Indiranagar have changed my name to Vedant Venkatraman Iyer for all purposes.

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I, CHINNA Duraipandian, S/o. Natchada Lingan, Arugankulam (Po), Sivagiri (TK), Tenkasi – 627757, Tamil Nadu. I have Lost my Chennai Anna University original Certificate as a Provisional Certificate No. 97008105007/ RG, Degree Consolidated Marksheet no. TVLC 116931, Transfer Certificate No.20081208, I.T.I Provisional Certificate No.0107664, I.T.I Trade Certificate No.070606, HSC Marksheet No.0644764, SSLC Mark sheet No.1079354, Passport No.W1388159. If anyone found this Document Contact : 6380500139

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LEGAL NOTICE
Before the Hon'ble Family Court Wayanad, Kalpetta
OP (Divorce) 330/2022
Padala Prabha Chand: Petitioner
Dilin, S/o. Kumaran: Respondent
To,
Dilin, S/o. Kumaran
No.48, 5th Cross, Near Ayyappa Temple, Ayyappa Nagar, Jalahalli, Bangalore North, Karnataka 560015, Now residing at No. 7, 1st Cross, Sreenivas Reddy lay out, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore – 560016
Where Padala Prabha Chand, D/o. K.Mohanan, Diya House, Sulthanbathery Post, Village & Taluk, Wayanad District, Kerala – 673592, the petitioner in the above number case has instituted divorce petition U/s 13(1)(ia)(ib) of Hindu Marriage Act against you. The Hon'ble court had ordered notice to you returnable by 04-04-2023. You are hereby informed to appear before the Hon'ble Court in person on 04.04.2023 at 11 AM and submit your objections if any, failing which you will be set exparte.
K.A.Krishnan, Bsc, LLB. Advocate for Petitioner.

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Interested firm should have valid registration with ESI, EPF, labour law & service tax. Interested parties are requested to submit their EOI along with all following supporting documents / credentials in a sealed envelope on or before 5th April 2023 to The General Superintendent, Christian Medical College, Ida Scudder Road, Vellore, Tamil Nadu – 632004.
For site visit kindly contact The General Superintendent Office, Ranipet Campus, CMC Vellore between 8.00 am & 4.00 pm on weekdays.

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The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Directorate General of Resettlement (DGR), Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, will be organising an employment seminar and job fair in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) at Air Force Station Jalahalli on Tuesday.

The seminar aims to provide appropriate placement opportunities to retiring and retired Armed Force personnel besides bringing ex-servicemen and employers and job providers on a single platform.

Veterans of the tri-services in age group of 37 to 57 years are eligible to participate.

Approximately 50 corporates and close to 2,000 veterans are expected to take part in the seminar.

Representatives of DGR, Directorate of Indian Army Veterans, Department of Ex-Servicemen Affairs of Indian Navy and Directorate of Air veterans, placement agencies of three services, HQTC IAF and Director Resettlement Zone also play a part in the seminar, said the Ministry of Defence.

The seminar will go a long way in providing suitable avenues of placement to the veterans in the corporate sector as part of their second career options for appointments ranging from senior supervisors, mid and senior level managers to strategic planners and project directors, it added. Participants would be facilitated with hospitality requirements at the venue.

Apply online

Applicants can download application forms from the DGR website-https//dgrindia.gov.in.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, MAR. 20	
RISE	06:24
SET	18:30
RISE	05:19
SET	17:21
TUESDAY, MAR. 21	
RISE	06:23
SET	18:30
RISE	06:05
SET	18:18
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 22	
RISE	06:23
SET	18:30
RISE	06:47
SET	19:14

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	32	22
Mysuru	32	20
Bengaluru	33	21

Bengaluru Today
31°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be slight warm. Night will be pleasant. Dry weather to continue.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
32°C The weather will be dry. A pleasant morning with mist and haze turns little warm day. Night will be pleasant.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
TAKE NOTICE THAT my client Mr. J. SANDEEP KUMAR, S/o. Mr. J.Satyanarayana is intending to purchase Municipal New No.58/1, situated at Albert Victoria Road, First Main Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore, from its owner Mr. N. SRINATH GUPTA, S/o. Mr. N.Subramanyam, hereinafter referred to as the "Schedule Property" and being more fully described in the Schedule hereunder.
Any person / firm / institution / company / Bank / financial institution having any claim / right / interest over the schedule Property is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within seven (15) days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her/their claim if any with all supporting documents failing which the transaction shall be completed without reference to such claims and such claims if any in future shall not be binding on my client.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of Property bearing Municipal New No.58/1, situated at Albert Victoria Road, First Main Road, Chamarajpet, Bangalore City Corporation Division No 26, Ward No. 46-CHAMARAJPET, BBMP PID No. 46-3-58/1, New PID No. 140-W0066 8, measuring ExW 30 Ft and NxS 54 Feet, totally measuring 1620 Square Feet or 150.06 Square Meters, together with RCC roofed building standing thereon and bounded on:
East by : Karpur Govinda Rao's Property, West by : Karpur Subba Rao's Property, North by : Road, South by : Property bearing No. 58.
Rashmi.R, Advocate,
No.07, 1st Floor, 2nd Main, Kalyananagar, Nagarabhavi Main Road, Bangalore-72.

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

The amount invested by FPIs in Indian equities till March 17

11,495 In ₹ crore. This was driven by bulk investment from the U.S.-based GQG Partners in the Adani Group companies. Foreign Portfoio Investors may take a cautious stance in their approach following the collapse of U.S.-based banks. PTI

The number of students to whom fee refunds were issued

14,443 students for the 2022-2023 academic session. The amount coming upto ₹30 crore included ₹17 crore from Delhi University, according to University Grants Commission (UGC) chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar. PTI

The amount approved by Union govt. under the Jal Jeevan Mission

2,000 In ₹ crore for Tripura. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha said that the amount was sanctioned to supply piped drinking water to households. At present, 56% of households in the State have piped water facilities. PTI

India asks countries to renegotiate BITs based on Model BIT 2015

68 countries. The Minister of State for External Affairs Rajkumar Ranjan Singh informed the Rajya Sabha that India had signed Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) with 83 countries/regions till 2015 based on the Model BIT of 1993 and as amended in 2003. PTI

The people killed in a strong earthquake in Ecuador and Peru

15 victims. The U.S. Geological Survey reported a 6.8 magnitude earthquake that was centred just off the Pacific Coast, about 80 km south of Guayaquil, Ecuador. One victim died in Peru, while 14 others died in Ecuador. 126 people were injured. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

PULSE-CHECK

What is late-life depression and how can you navigate it?

Geriatric depression has three risk factors — biological, psychological, and social. For treatment, experts take a four-pronged approach which involves psychotherapy, medications, brain stimulation, and family therapy

Alok Kulkarni

Is depression more difficult to treat in old age? Late-life depression (LLD) is caused by multiple factors working together. It has three broad risk factors – biological, psychological, and social.

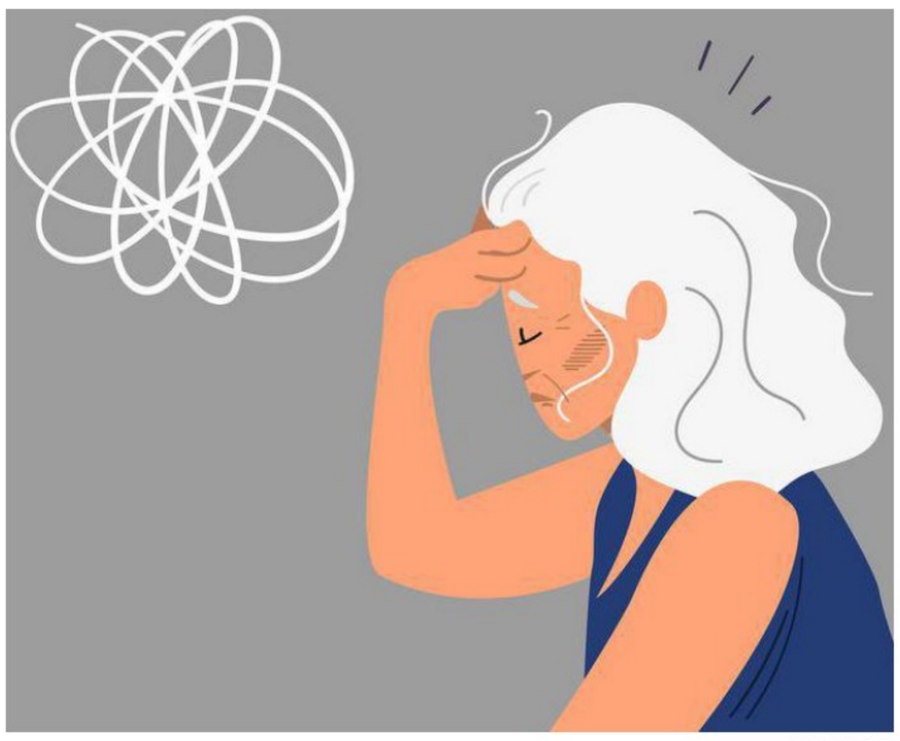
What are the biological risk factors?
Scientists are yet to identify a candidate biomarker – a biological molecule in blood, body fluids, or other tissues, that is a sign of a disease process – for LLD. On the other hand, studies have found some evidence for genetic contribution to LLD. Scientists have also advanced several hypotheses involving the genes that code for serotonin synthesis, norepinephrine transporter, and the neurotrophic factor, but these ideas require more tests. A subset of LLD, called vascular depression, may be associated with cerebrovascular lesions.

Stress that accumulates over one's life leads to a sustained secretion of cortisol, the hormone that regulates the body's stress response. Increased cortisol levels lead to the loss of brain cells in the hippocampus, which is implicated in memory and learning. (This brain cell loss can be partially mitigated by the use of antidepressants.)

Researchers have proposed a vascular theory based on the observation that depression is a frequent outcome in people who have had a stroke. Vascular depression is associated with brain lesions, which appear as bright spots on brain scans. These spots, called white matter hyperintensities, disrupt brain signalling and brain circuits.

Heart attacks and heart conditions often lead to LLD, as do diabetes and hip fracture. Depressive symptoms can also manifest if a person doesn't optimally recover from physical illnesses.

What are psychological risk factors?
Personality attributes may colour the origin and expression of depressive symptoms in older adults. Neuroticism – the personality disposition to experience negative emotions, anger, irritability, and emotional instability – is consistently implicated in LLD. Depressed individuals may overreact to life events or misinterpret them. Recent adverse life events (loss of a job, bereavement, etc.) are more frequently reported among depressed elderly people than among non-depressed older adults.



ISTOCKPHOTO

The locus of control refers to the degree to which an individual feels a sense of agency in their life. A person with an external locus of control will feel that external forces – such as random chance, environmental factors, or the actions of others – are more responsible for the events that occur in the their own life. The 1995 Longitudinal Aging Study Amsterdam found that the emergence and persistence of depressive symptoms were predicted by having an external locus of control.

What are the social risk factors?
Lower socioeconomic status has been associated with depression across the life cycle. The construct of social support includes perception, structure of the social network, and the tangible help and assistance available. Perceived social support is the most robust predictor of LLD symptoms.

In my practice, I hear people say that while their old social networks have thinned out, many new ones have emerged – a timely reminder to not assume that older adults are bound to experience deficits in social support.

How is clinical assessment of depression conducted?
Clinical assessment involves evaluating the duration of the current episode; screening for previous depressive episodes; ruling out substance misuse; looking at the course of previous episodes, if any; ascertaining the response to previous interventions, and looking at a family history of depression and/or suicide.

Assessing the cognitive status of the individual is critical to evaluate depressed older patients. This is aided by the use of screening scales such as the Mini Mental-State Examination. No assessment is complete without a thorough physical examination of all the other systems as well.

Frequently, physicians order tests involving the thyroid and metabolic panel, vitamin B12, folate and vitamin D levels, and some other biochemistries. Physicians also often order a brain scan for LLD. This is to rule out other possible pathologies (such as stroke or tumour), which may present with a clinical picture of depression. The physician may also order an electrocardiogram before medication.

How is late-life depression treated?
Experts generally take a four-pronged approach to treat geriatric depression, involving psychotherapy, medications, brain stimulation, and family therapy.

Talking therapies, such as cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), help to identify maladaptive thought patterns, and then restructure these patterns to help the depressed individual cope and feel better.

Maladaptive cognitions, such as "I am useless" or "It's all going to go wrong", are subject to empirical examination. The therapist will seek evidence in support of these ideas and alternative ways to view one's own life. The individual may also be asked to keep a diary of activities, to set goals, and to try doing things that they fear. This is often accompanied by encouraging the individual to write down their goals and to track their progress.

Typically, there will be six to 20 CBT sessions, with each session lasting for 30-60 minutes. There is some evidence to suggest that the long-term benefits of CBT could equal that of drug therapy.

A range of safe and effective drugs are available to treat geriatric depression When combined with talk therapy, the efficacy of either of the interventions increases. A common dictum in prescribing medications to older adults is to 'start low and go slow'. Antidepressants are often asked to be taken for six to nine months after the remission of a depressive episode. Contrary to popular belief, these drugs are not addictive, and patients can be safely weaned off them once the course is complete.

Neurostimulation modalities such as electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) are used to treat severe forms of depression, suicidality, and psychotic depression (characterised by delusions and hallucinations). ECT continues to be the most effective treatment for people with severe major depressive episodes.

Can family members help?
The final component of therapy for LLD is working with the family. A dysfunctional family may contribute to depressive symptoms. Family support is critical for a successful outcome in the treatment of the elderly individual. Families are taught to acknowledge the individual's distress with helpful responses such as "I hear what you are saying, and I understand".

Family members are educated about the nature of the depressive disorder, and the potential risks of geriatric depression, especially suicide. They can assist the clinician by observing behavioural changes in the individual, including increased withdrawal, decreased verbal responses, and a preoccupation with medications or weapons.

The family can also help by removing possible implements of suicide from places of easy access. They can also assume the responsibility of administering medications to an older adult who may be non-adherent or whose risk of self-harm is high.

LLD is verily treatable. The onus lies on us to take care of our elderly.

Dr. Alok Kulkarni is a senior geriatric psychiatrist and neurophysician at the Manas Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Hubli

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

She did not bat an eye at the news

She has misophonia. She can't stand the sound of nails scraping across a blackboard

S. Upendran

What is the meaning and origin of 'bat an eye'? (C.V. Amarnath, Vizag)

This rather old expression is mostly used in informal contexts. When you say something unexpected, and the other person does not 'bat an eye', what it means is that the individual did not react in any way. He did not register emotion of any kind; there was no hint of anger, surprise, fear, embarrassment, etc. The idiom is generally used in the negative.

When Aditya told Sheela he wanted a divorce, she didn't even bat an eye.

According to scholars, the expression comes from the world of falconry. In the past, birds of prey, such as falcons and hawks, were used by soldiers and hunters. The trained birds used to fly around looking for food, and then when they returned, they used to land on their owner's arm. Once they landed, they would flutter their wings before settling down. The English borrowed the French word 'battre' to refer to this fluttering. With the passage of time, however, the word and its meaning underwent a change. In many dialects of English, 'battre' became 'bat', and 'flutter' changed to 'blink'. When you bat an eye, you blink – something that all of us do unconsciously.

How is the word 'misophonia' pronounced? (K. Leela, Chennai)

This rather formal word consists of five syllables. The first syllable sounds like the word 'miss', and the vowel in the second and final syllable is pronounced like the 'a' in 'china'. The third syllable is pronounced like the word 'phone', and the vowel in the fourth is like the 'i' in 'sit' and 'pit'. One way of pronouncing the word is 'mis-e-PHONE-i-e' with the stress on the third syllable. The first and third syllables should not lead one to conclude that the word means 'missing one's phone'! The 'phone' in the word refers to sound and not the instrument we all use to stay in touch with each other. 'Misophonia' is a disorder; people who have it react very negatively to certain sounds – the emotions that they exhibit when hearing the sound may vary from one of disgust, anger, panic, annoyance, etc. For example, some people get extremely angry when they can hear the other person chewing. These sounds drive the person crazy, and as a result, the reaction is unusually strong. A friend of mine gets very irritated and uncomfortable when he hears a spoon scraping the bottom of a cup.

upendrankye@gmail.com

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The recent collapse of the Silicon Valley Bank has yet again put renewed focus on the technology hub which is Silicon Valley. A quiz on the San Francisco Bay Area

Venkataraghavan Srinivasan

QUESTION 1
What is the name of the infamous prison located on an island in the San Francisco Bay?

QUESTION 2
Which financial services company began in 1982 by Bill Biggerstaff and Robert Medearis over a poker game?

QUESTION 3
Which on-demand transportation company was founded in San Francisco in 2009?

QUESTION 4
Which San Francisco park is known for its iconic zigzag path and scenic views of the city?

QUESTION 5
Which social media platform was originally designed as a mobile app for sharing photos?

Visual question:
By what name is the district that houses such beautiful murals and art in San Francisco known as?

Questions and Answers to the March 17 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The siblings Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert emulated during the 80th Academy Awards. **Ans: The Coen Brothers, Joel and Ethan, who won for *No Country for Old Men*.**
2. M.M. Keeravani adapted and sung this classic while accepting his Oscar. **Ans: 'Top of the World' by The Carpenters**
3. Who was Dominic, who accompanied Jimmy Kimmel onto the stage? **Ans: He was a donkey standing in for Jenny the donkey from the *Banshees of Inisherin***
4. This Nobel Laureate responded to a question from Kimmel with the answer "I only talk about peace". **Ans: Malala Yousafzai**
5. Some of the other nominees were *Haulout* and *How Do You Measure a Year?* while the winner of the category was this flick. **Ans: *The Elephant Whisperers***
6. Ke Huy Quan and Harrison Ford worked together in this film. **Ans: *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom***
7. This film prior to *Everything Everywhere All At Once* won the best picture, best director, and three acting prizes. **Ans: A googly! It was the first flick to do so**
Visual: This living legend set a record at this year's Oscars. **Ans: The great composer John Williams, became the oldest ever Academy Award nominee, thanks to the nod for the score of *The Fabelmans***
Early Birds: **M. Suresh Kumar| Preeti Chockalingam| Harwin Tom**

Word of the day

Traduce:
speak unfavourably about

Synonyms: badmouth, drag through the mud, malign

Usage:
He has paid multiple people to traduce his rival's character.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/traducepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /tɹəˈdjuːs/, /tɹəˈdʒuːs/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

ISRO to conduct young scientist programme

YUVIKA will impart basic knowledge on space technology, space science and space applications to students of Class IX

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is organising a young scientist programme, Yuva Vigyani Karyakram (YUVIKA), to impart basic knowledge on space technology, space science and space applications to students of Class IX. The registration for the programme starts today.

ISRO said that it has chalked out this programme to 'catch them young' and that it is also expected to encourage more students to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based research and careers.

The YUVIKA programme will be conducted between May 15 and 26 at seven centres – ISRO-Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS) Dehradun, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) Thiruvananthapuram, Satish Dhawan Space Center (SDSC) Sriharikota, U. R. Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) Bengaluru, Space Applications Centre (SAC) Ahmedabad, National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) Hyderabad and North-Eastern Space Applications Centre (NE-SAC) Shillong.

The space agency added that a minimum participation will be ensured from each State and Union Territory.

The selection of participants will be carried out on the basis of parameters like marks obtained in Class VIII or last conducted exam, performance in the online quiz, participation in science fair, rank in Olympiad or equivalent, winners of sport competitions, scouts and guides, NCC, NSS member and those studying in village schools located in panchayat areas.

The cost of the course material, lodging and boarding etc., during the entire course will be borne by ISRO.

Interested students studying in Class 9 as on 1 January 2023 within India are eligible to apply at www.isro.gov.in/YUVIKA.html. The last day for registration is April 3.

Techie booked for attempt to kill wife and end his life

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

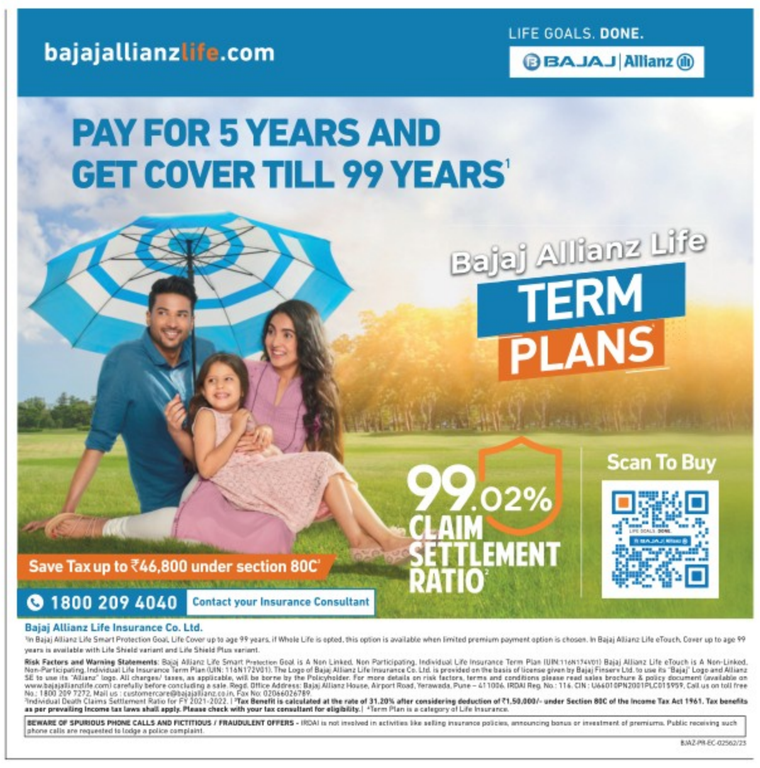
The Rajarajeshwari Nagar police registered a case against a software engineer who allegedly attempted to kill his wife and later try to end his life at their home . The incident occurred on Saturday.

The accused Harsha, from Tumakuru, was married to Sudharani. The couple are IT professionals and have an 11 year-old son.

According to the police, recently, Harsha sold a piece of land at his native place and got a huge amount of money. He stopped going to work and became addicted to alcohol. The couple used to have frequent fights as a result of this. On Saturday, they got into an argument which took an ugly turn when Harsha banged Sudharani's head against the wall. Due to the sudden attack, Sudharani collapsed and fell unconscious. Their son rushed to get help from his relatives staying a little away from home.

Harsha then decided to end his life and slashed his wrists. The neighbours and relatives rushed to the house and found the couple in a pool of blood. The duo was rushed to a nearby hospital the police was alerted. The police are awaiting the recovery of the couple to question them.

(Those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 for help)



KSRTC to operate e-buses on five more inter-city routes

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After introducing electric bus services to Mysuru from Bengaluru, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) will operate buses on five more inter-city routes.

In coming days, the KSRTC will operate buses from Bengaluru to destinations such as Virajpet, Madikeri, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga and Davangere. Under the FAME II scheme of the Centre, the KSRTC is leasing 50 AC e-buses. A total of 50 buses will be operated through a private player. The KSRTC had branded these new buses as 'EV Power Plus.'

On Monday, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai will flag off 25 buses at Vidhana Soudha. An official of the KSRTC said, "The service introduced between Bengaluru-Mysuru received good patronage. We are hoping that even on new routes, there will be more patronage."

'Pedal Shale'

V. Manjula, Commissioner, Directorate of Urban Land Transport, along with members of various cycling communities, launching posters and the logo of 'Pedal Shale', a free bicycle training programme at Band Stand Circle, Cubbon Park, in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Vokkaligara Sangha takes exception to Uri Gowda and Nanje Gowda characters, threatens agitation

It has urged the State government to take action against those behind peddling lies in the name of Vokkaligas even as BJP leaders continue their claims on the two fictional warriors

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Without referring to the Bharatiya Janata Party, which has started a narrative on fictional characters of Uri Gowda and Nanje Gowda as the brave soldiers who killed Tipu Sultan, the Vokkaligara Sangha on Sunday urged the State government to take action against those behind peddling lies in the name of Vokkaligas even as BJP leaders continued their claims on the two fictional warriors.

The sangha has threatened to launch an agitation under the leadership of Adichunchangiri Mutt seer Nirmalanandanath Swamy and Spathikapuri seer Nanjavadhuta Swamy - two religious heads of the community - if the State government does not stop spreading lies.

> What is the conspiracy behind creating characters that were not in history and giving it publicity? The Vokkaliga community will not tolerate insults through such lies.
>
> **C.N. BALAKRISHNA**
> President, Vokkaligara Sangha

"What is the conspiracy behind creating characters that were not in history and giving it publicity?" sangha president C.N. Balakrishna asked in a press note. He said: "The Vokkaliga community will not tolerate insults through such lies. Since elections are round the corner, there is a possibility of spreading lies to benefit politically. The State government should identify those behind these lies and strict action has to be initiated against them."

Incidentally, Mr. Balakrishna is a Janata Dal (Secular) legislator representing Shravanabelagola Assembly constituency in Hassan district. The JD (S), which draws strength from Vokkaliga heartland, has been engaged in a battle of words with BJP since past week. Opposing the BJP's narrative of Tipu's killers bitterly, the JD (S) has said that the lies not only insult Vokkaligas, who will get portrayed as villains for killing a freedom fighter, but also vitiate harmonious relationship with Muslims.

Further, he said that if no action is initiated to provide Vokkaligas reservation based on the population ratio, a rally will be taken out in protest.

"The creation of Category 2C to provide Vokkaligas reservation is an eyewash and it will not help the community." He, however, welcomed the State government's decision to provide EWS certificate to urban Vokkaligas, who are economically poor.

Meanwhile, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shobha Karandlaje and BJP general secretary C.T. Ravi continued with their claims on Uri Gowda and Nanje Gowda on Sunday too. The y had earlier defended the issue by claiming that they were not fictional but real characters.

Poster of the film Uri Gowda-Nanje Gowda.

Minister announces film launch on May 18

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In another development, Horticulture Minister and film producer Muniratna, who amidst the controversy registered 'Uri Gowda -Nanje Gowda' as a film title under his production Vrushabhavati productions, on Sunday announced the launch of the movie and released initial poster on Twitter. The film will go under production on May 18.

"The historical film Uri Gowda-Nanje Gowda that is based on facts and produced by Vrushabhadri Productions will be launched on May 18 at Kanteerava Studio. The screenplay will be written by C.N. Ashwath Narayan, and directed by R.S. Gowda," Mr. Muniratna announced. The movie poster has pictures of Revenue Minister R. Ashok and BJP general secretary C.T. Ravi besides Mr. Muniratna. However, Mr. Ashwath Narayan on Sunday evening distanced himself from the movie. He told reporters here: "I am committed to what I have said (on the issue). But I am not involved in the movie."

Mr. Muniratna is also expected to meet Adichunchangiri seer to discuss his stand on the film.

Congress set to hold rally in Belagavi today

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

The Congress is set to hold its first mega rally in Karnataka before the summer elections for the Assembly with Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi addressing it in Belagavi on Monday.

Party leaders Randeep Singh Surjewala, D.K. Shivakumar and Satish Jarkiholi visited the venue, the College of Physical Education Grounds, on Club Road here on Sunday to take stock of the preparations for the rally.

The party leaders said that three to four lakh people are expected to turn up for the event.

Guarantee card

Mr. Surjewala said that Mr. Gandhi will release the party's fourth guarantee card, Yuva Kranti Card, which is part of the party manifesto that promises a range of measures for youth, if the party were to come to power.

With the Belagavi rally, the Congress will virtually kick off its campaign in the State. It hopes to improve its chances in Karnataka, especially in the 110 seats in the northern region.

Party leaders say that it will focus on those seats where the BJP is not confident of winning, apart from focusing on areas considered traditional Congress strongholds.

Belagavi was chosen for a few vital reasons, they say. With 18 Assembly seats, it has the second largest chunk of seats, after Bengaluru.

BJP MLAs were elected from 13 of the 18 Assembly constituencies in Belagavi. Three of them are seats held by defectors, Ramesh Jarkiholi, Srimant Patil and Mahesh Kumthalli.

The rising influence of Ramesh Jarkiholi, seen as an outsider to the Sangh Parivar fold, has been detested by some old timers in the district BJP unit. It is no secret that the Belagavi BJP is vertically divided between the factions led by Ramesh Jarkiholi and Laxman Savadi, former Deputy Chief Minister.

The death of senior leader Umesh Katti and former Deputy Speaker Anand Mamani have dented the influence of the BJP in Belagavi. The Congress is pinning its hopes on Hukkeri and Saundatti, the seats vacated by these two leaders.

Mr. Satish Jarkiholi [KPCC working president] even invited Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Siddaramaiah to contest from Saundatti, though the latter has not accepted it.

There is even speculation of the former MP and Umesh Katti's brother Ramesh Katti joining the Congress and seeking election from Nippani.

JD(S) lodges complaint

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The JD(S) has complained to the Chief Electoral Officer of Karnataka that there have been unwarranted complaints by officers on election duty in Bengaluru Rural district. Pointing to a complaint registered by the flying squad against JD (S) youth wing president Nikhil Kumaraswamy, the party's legal wing president said these are merely attempts to scuffle the voice of a regional party.

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT OFFICER, BACKWARD CLASSES WELFARE DEPARTMENT, HASSAN. D.Devaraja arasu bhavan, Shree vidyagangapathi Temple Cross road, Near Akshavani, Salagame Road, Hassan-573202.
No.BCWD/Tender/CR-36/2022-23 Date:18-03-2023
Tender Notification : : Calendar of Events
INVITING TENDER FOR PROVIDING HUMAN SERVICES THROUGH OUTSOURCING AGENCY FOR VACANT GROUP-D & TEACHING AND NON TEACHING STAFF TO MORAJI DESAI RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL OF BACKWARD CLASSES WELFARE DEPARTMENT, HASSAN DISTRICT "FOR THE YEAR 2023-24" 1.Tender Reference No and date No.BCWD/Tender/CR-36/2022-23 Date:17-03-2023 2.AMOUNT PUT TO TENDER RS.(lakh) 323.59 lakhs 3.EMD AMOUNT IN RS.(lakh) 4.85 lakhs 4.Commencement of download of E-tender form from website Date:18-03-2023 onwards 5.Pre Bid Meeting Date, Place and Time Date:17-04-2023 Time 11.00 A.M. District office, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Hassan District, Hassan. (Place & Date May vary) 6.Last date & Time for submission of Tender Till Date:16-05-2023 Time 5.30 P.M. 7.Date & Time of opening of Technical bid Date:19-05-2023 Time 11.00 A.M. District office, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Hassan District, Hassan. (Place & Date May vary) 8.Date & Time of opening of Financial Bid Date:22-05-2023 Time 11.00 A.M. District office, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Hassan District, Hassan. (Place & Date May vary) 9.Communication Address and Contact number for further enquiry Website: www.eproc.karnataka. gov.in or District office, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Vidya Ganapathi Temple. Road , Near, MCE, Hassan-573202, Telephone-08172-295108 Email:-dobcmHassan@gmail.com
Sd/- District Officer, Backward classes Welfare Dept, Hassan Dist, Hassan.
ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/ಎಂಸಿಎ/1285/2021–22

Karnataka Urban Water Supply & Drainage Board
Office of the Chief Engineer
Jalamandali Compound, Sir.M. Vishveshvarayya Road,Dharwad-580 001
Tel No: 0836-2447090 E-mail: kwbcen@gmail.com
TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement Portal only)
Tenders for the following works are invited (two cover system) through e-Procurement portal (https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in) from the eligible Agency / contractors who satisfy the Technical & Financial eligibility criteria. **This office Tender Notification No: 2675, Dated: 16-03-2023. (1)** Providing Water Supply Distribution System to Muddebihal Town under AMRUT 2.0 including Operation & Maintenance for a Period of 5 Years (Including 1 year DLP) through Design, Build, Operation and Transfer (DBOT) Mode. (Lumpsum Tender – No Variation). **WORK_INDENT3369. (2)** Remodeling of Water Supply Distribution system to Chadachan Town under AMRUT 2.0 including Operation & Maintenance for a Period of 5 Years (Including 1 year DLP) through Design, Build, Operation and Transfer (DBOT) Mode. (Lumpsum Tender – No Variation). **WORK_INDENT3370.** For further information visit e-procurement portal or the Office of the Chief Engineer, K.U.W.S & D. Board, Dharwad may be contacted.
DIPR/DWD/1289/2022-23/DeshpandePublicity
Sd/-CHIEF ENGINEER, KUWS & D BOARD, DHARWAD.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE
REMEMBRANCE
RESPECTFUL HOMAGE

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Founder Promoter of
Drilcos India (P) Ltd, Chennai
Aquaserene Resorts, Kollam
Mrs. Hema Jayachandran
Lakshmi jayadev, Jayadev Gopinath
Samiya, Sathya
IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
Bengaluru: 98455 29981,
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575,
from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Online booking: www.thehinduads.com
DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, SHIVAMOGGA DISTRICT, SHIVAMOGGA.
PHONE: 08182 – 272282 & 271101 FAX: 277082, e-mail: deo.shimoga@gmail.com
NO.DCO/ELN/1215/2023-24 Date : 19.03.2023
SHORT-TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION
Tenders have been invited as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 1999 and Act 2000 from the interested and eligible contractors through e-procurement portal to provide materials/services to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, City Corporation, and all the Taluks of the District as described in the following works in view of Karnataka General Elections 2023. Interested contractors can submit their application through e-procurement portal **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sl No.	Name of works	EMD (In Rs)
1	**Supplying stationery materials and Xerox/printing** services to Deputy Commissioner's Office and 7 Vidhana Sabha constituencies of Shivamogga in connection with Karnataka General elections.	As per tender document.
2	Providing computers, printers, cartridges & other materials/services to Deputy Commissioner's Office and 7 Vidhana Sabha constituencies of no Shivamogga in connection with Karnataka General elections.	
3	Providing catering services in connection with Karnataka General elections	

Schedule of tender: 1) Date from which Bid document is ready for download through E-Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka : **20.03.2023 from 4:30 PM 2)** Last Date & Time for tender queries/ clarification (Only to the E-mail specified in Tender document/through e-procurement portal) : **25.03.2023 upto 04:30 PM 3)** Prebid meeting : **28.03.2023 @ 4.00 PM 4)** Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders : **04.04.2023 till 04:30 PM 5)** Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid : **05.04.2023 @ 04:30 PM 5)** Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid : **10.04.2023 @ 04:30 PM.**
Shivamogga District, Shivamogga.
DIPR/SMG/No.159/ZENKAR/2022-23
Sd/- Dy Commissioner and District Election Officer,

THE COURT OF THE XCI ADDI, CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE AND SPECIAL JUDGE FOR KPIDFE ACT AT BENGALURU
Misc No.1158/2022
BETWEEN :
The Competent Authority,
for M/s. Ambidant Marketing Private Limited, 3rd Floor, Mini V.V.Tower, Podium Block, Dr.Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001. Rep by its Competent Authority, Dr. Ashok D.R, Joint Secretary .... Petitioner
AND
M/s. Ambidant Marketing Private Limited, Regd Office: at No.9A, K.H.B. Main Road, Kanakanagara, R.T.Nagar Post, Bengaluru-560032. Represented by its Managing Director Syed Fareed Ahmed S/o. D.S.Jalaluddin, R/a No.374, Kushal Nagara, Opposite Hanifiya Masjid, Venkateshapuram, Bengaluru-560045 and 2 others.
..... Respondents
Notice to Respondent No.2
2) M/s Sanchaya Land and Estate Pvt. Ltd., Represented by its Director, C/O Sri Ravipati Taraka Ragunath, No, 479, PID No.98-45-479, Situated at HMT layout, RT Nagar, Bengaluru 560032.
Whereas, the petitioner has filed the above petition under section 5(2) of the KPIDFE Act 2004 against Respondent.
The Respondent No.2 are hereby issued show cause notice u/s 12 (1) of KPIDFE Act 2004, to appear in court of the XCI Addl City Civil & Sessions Judge (CCH-92) at Bengaluru, in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able answer all material questions relating to above petitions on **25th March 2023 at 11.00 Clock** in the forenoon.
Take notice that in default of your appearance on the date above mentioned petition will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on this day **28th February 2023.**
BY ORDER OF THE COURT
Sd/- Assistant Registrar, City Civil Court, Bengaluru
Sri Venkatesh P. Dalwai., Special Public Prosecutor

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ.
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, SHIVAMOGGA DISTRICT, SHIVAMOGGA.
Ph: 08182–272282 & 271101, FAX: 277082, E-mail: deo.shimoga@gmail.com
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ. DCO/ELN/1215/2023-24 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 19.03.2023
ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವತ್ರಿಕ ಚುನಾವಣೆ 2023ಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಆಯುಕ್ತರ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕುಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಸಾಮಾಗ್ರಿ/ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕ ನಿಯಮ 1999 ಮತ್ತು 2000ರ ಅನುಸಾರವಾಗಿ ಆಸಕ್ತ ಹಾಗೂ ಅರ್ಹತೆಯುಳ್ಳ ಬಿಡ್ದುದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆಸಕ್ತ ಬಿಡ್ದುದಾರರು ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು.
ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು: 1) ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವತ್ರಿಕ ಚುನಾವಣೆ 2023ಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ ಹಾಗೂ 7 ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ಲೇಖನ ಸಾಮಾಗ್ರಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಮುದ್ರಣ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು (Staionery Material & Xerox/ Printing) ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಕುರಿತು. **ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ):** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜಿನ ಅನುಸಾರದಂತೆ. 2) ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವತ್ರಿಕ ಚುನಾವಣೆ 2023ಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ ಹಾಗೂ 7 ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್, ಪ್ರಿಂಟರ್, ಕಾರ್ಟ್ರಿಡ್ಜ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ಸಾಮಾಗ್ರಿ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುವ ಕುರಿತು. **ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ):** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜಿನ ಅನುಸಾರದಂತೆ. 3) ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವತ್ರಿಕ ಚುನಾವಣೆ 2023ಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಊಟೋಪಚಾರ ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುವ ಕುರಿತು. **ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ):** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜಿನ ಅನುಸಾರದಂತೆ.
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯ ವೇಳಾಪಟ್ಟಿ: 1) Date from which Bid document is ready for download through E-Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka: 20.03.2023 from 04:30 PM. 2) Last Date & Time for tender queries/ clarification (Only to the E-mail specified in Tender document/through e-procurement portal): 25.03.2023 upto 04:30 PM. 3) Prebid meeting: 28.03.2023 @ 4:00 PM. 4) Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders: 04.04.2023 till 04:30 PM. 5) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid: 05.04.2023 @ 04:30 PM. 6) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid: 10.04.2023 @ 04:30 PM.
ಸಹಿ/– ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಚುನಾವಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು,
ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ.
RO No. : DIPR/SMG/KSMCA/2022-23

THE COURT OF THE XCI ADDI, CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE AND SPECIAL JUDGE FOR KPIDFE ACT AT BENGALURU
Misc No.1559/2022
BETWEEN :
The Competent Authority,
for M/s. Ambidant Marketing Private Limited, 3rd Floor, Mini V.V.Tower, Podium Block, Dr.Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001. Rep by its Competent Authority, Dr. Ashok D.R, Joint Secretary .... Petitioner
AND
M/s. Ambidant Marketing Private Limited, Regd Office: at No.9A, K.H.B. Main Road, Kanakanagara, R.T.Nagar Post, Bengaluru-560032. Represented by its Managing Director Syed Fareed Ahmed S/o. D.S.Jalaluddin, R/a No.374, Kushal Nagara, Opposite Hanifiya Masjid, Venkateshapuram, Bengaluru-560045 and 2 others.
..... Respondents
Notice to Respondent No. 2 & 3
2) M/s Sanchaya Land and Estate Pvt. Ltd., Represented by its Director, C/O Sri Ravipati Taraka Ragunath, No, 479, PID No.98-45-479, Situated at HMT layout, RT Nagar, Bengaluru 560032.
3) Mohammed Abdulla Khan S/o Wasiulla Khan, No 660, 1st floor, 16th cross, 3rd stage, Lingarajapuram, Bengaluru 560084.
Whereas, the petitioner has filed the above petition under section 5(2) of the KPIDFE Act 2004 against Respondent.
The Respondent No.2 & 3 are hereby issued show cause notice u/s 12 (1) of KPIDFE Act 2004, to appear in court of the XCI Addl City Civil & Sessions Judge (CCH-92) at Bengaluru, in person or by a pleader duly instructed and able answer all material questions relating to above petitions on **25th March 2023 at 11.00 Clock** in the forenoon.
Take notice that in default of your appearance on the date above mentioned petition will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on this day **1st March 2023.**
BY ORDER OF THE COURT
Sd/- Assistant Registrar, City Civil Court, Bengaluru
Sri Venkatesh P. Dalwai., Special Public Prosecutor

FORM A
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
(Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017)
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF
INNOVIUM INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED

1	NAME OF CORPORATE PERSON	**INNOVIUM INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED**
2	DATE OF INCORPORATION OF CORPORATE PERSON	**19/08/2016**
3	AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH CORPORATE PERSON IS INCORPORATED/ REGISTERED	**ROC-BANGALORE, MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS**
4	CORPORATE IDENTITY NUMBER / LIMITED LIABILITY IDENTITY NUMBER OF CORPORATE PERSON	**U72200KA2016FTC095858**
5	ADDRESS OF THE REGISTERED OFFICE AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE (IF ANY) OF CORPORATE PERSON	Innovent Spaces, Floor-4 GA-O-09, Survey No.293/154/172, Outer Ring Road, Kadubeesanahalli, Bangalore-560103, Karnataka, India
6	LIQUIDATION COMMENCEMENT DATE OF CORPORATE PERSON	**17TH MARCH 2023**
7	NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND THE REGISTRATION NUMBER OF THE LIQUIDATOR, AUTHORISATION FOR ASSIGNMENT (AFA) Validity	**MR. THIRUPAL GORIGE NO. 87, 2ND FLOOR, 21ST CROSS, 7TH MAIN, N S. PALYA, BTM 2ND STAGE, BANGALORE-560076, KARNATAKA, INDIA CELL +91 94483 84064, LL 080 79634233 EMAIL: gthirupal@gmail.com IP REGISTRATION NO. IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00016/2016-17/10030**
8	LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS	**16TH APRIL 2023**

Notice is hereby given that **INNOVIUM INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED** has commenced voluntary liquidation on **17th March 2023.**
The stakeholders of **INNOVIUM INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED** are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims, on or before **16th April 2023** to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 7.
The financial creditors shall submit their proof of claims by electronic means only. All other stakeholders may submit the proof of claims in person, by post or by electronic means. Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.
Date:18.03.2023 **Thirupal Gorige**
Place: Bangalore **Liquidator**

FORM A
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
(Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017)
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF
CORTINA NETWORK SYSTEMS PRIVATE LIMITED

1	NAME OF CORPORATE PERSON	**CORTINA NETWORK SYSTEMS PRIVATE LIMITED**
2	DATE OF INCORPORATION OF CORPORATE PERSON	**05/09/2003**
3	AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH CORPORATE PERSON IS INCORPORATED/ REGISTERED	**ROC-BANGALORE, MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS**
4	CORPORATE IDENTITY NUMBER / LIMITED LIABILITY IDENTITY NUMBER OF CORPORATE PERSON	**U72200KA2003PTC032504**
5	ADDRESS OF THE REGISTERED OFFICE AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE (IF ANY) OF CORPORATE PERSON	#15, GOLF COURSE ROAD Off H.A.L. AIRPORT ROAD BANGALORE-560008, KARNATAKA, INDIA
6	LIQUIDATION COMMENCEMENT DATE OF CORPORATE PERSON	**17TH MARCH 2023**
7	NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND THE REGISTRATION NUMBER OF THE LIQUIDATOR, AUTHORISATION FOR ASSIGNMENT (AFA) Validity	**MR. THIRUPAL GORIGE NO. 87, 2ND FLOOR, 21ST CROSS, 7TH MAIN, N S. PALYA, BTM 2ND STAGE, BANGALORE-560076, KARNATAKA, INDIA CELL +91 94483 84064, LL 080 79634233 EMAIL: gthirupal@gmail.com IP REGISTRATION NO. IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00016/2016-17/10030**
8	LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS	**16TH APRIL 2023**

Notice is hereby given that **Cortina Network Systems Private Limited** has commenced voluntary liquidation on **17th March 2023.**
The stakeholders of **Cortina Network Systems Private Limited** are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims, on or before **16th April 2023** to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 7.
The financial creditors shall submit their proof of claims by electronic means only. All other stakeholders may submit the proof of claims in person, by post or by electronic means. Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.
Date:18.03.2023 **Thirupal Gorige**
Place: Bangalore **Liquidator**

Speculation rife over Siddaramaiah contesting from Varuna segment

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Speculations are rife in political circles in Mysuru over former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's entry into the poll fray from Varuna Assembly segment after his son and MLA Yathindra Siddaramaiah confirmed the Congress high command's reluctance to field him from Kolar Assembly constituency.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Mr. Yathindra, who represents Varuna Assembly constituency, said he was not aware of the reasons behind the high command's directions.

However, he said the party high command's refusal to field Mr. Siddaramaiah from Kolar cannot be based on an internal survey, which had clearly indicated that the situation was favourable to the former Chief Minister. The media can find out the reasons for the same from Mr. Siddaramaiah himself, he added.

Reacting to the charges from the BJP that Mr. Siddaramaiah does not have a constituency to contest from, Mr. Yathindra said the former Chief Minister has been invited from several constituencies including Badami, which he currently represents, to contest and his chances of victory are strong everywhere.

Mr. Siddaramaiah had opted for Kolar as it was close to Bengaluru and he could easily visit the constituency.

Mr. Yathindra said there was little doubt about JD (S) and BJP joining hands against Mr. Siddaramaiah wherever he contests. In Chamundeshwari, where Mr. Siddaramaiah suffered a humiliating rout during the 2018 Assembly elections, Mr. Yathindra said G.T. Deve Gowda of the JD (S) could manage to win because the BJP fielded a weak candidate and their votes were transferred to the JD (S).

Reacting to speculations over Mr. Siddaramaiah eventually returning to the fray from Varuna Assembly segment, Mr. Yathindra said he would vacate the seat for his father and campaign for him. Mr. Yathindra also sought to make it clear that he would not contest from any other constituency if Mr. Siddaramaiah chooses to contest from Varuna as it would impact the aspirations of ticket seekers from other constituencies.

Mr. Siddaramaiah had publicly ruled out contesting the elections from Chamundeshwari Assembly constituency again.

Whenever party workers at public functions held in Mysuru over the last few months urged him to contest from Chamundeshwari segment again, Mr. Siddaramaiah had firmly rejected the suggestions.

Sangita Kalanidhi award, 2023 goes to Bombay Jayashri

Music Academy has selected Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari, who excels in Bharathanatyam and Kuchipudi, for Nritya Kalanidhi honour

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Carnatic vocalist Bombay Jayashri has been selected for the Sangita Kalanidhi award of the Music Academy for 2023. The Nritya Kalanidhi award for dance will go to Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari.

"The executive committee of the Music Academy at its meeting on Sunday, unanimously decided to confer the awards," N. Murali, President of the academy, said.

Bombay Jayashri

Talking to *The Hindu* from London, Ms. Jayashri attributed her success in her career and awards to the blessings of her violinist guru, the late Lalgudi G. Jayaraman. "That he was my guru itself was a blessing," she said while acknowledging the support of her parents and family.

Mr. Murali conveyed the message about the award to her in London, and she thanked the academy.

Ms. Jayashri also thanked the musicians who would accompany her in concerts. "Music is a concerted effort and we created music together," she said. "I am also grateful to the followers of my music."

Initially trained under her parents and later under T.R. Balamani and Lalgudi G. Jayaraman, Ms. Jayashri is a veena player and dancer and is also trained in Hindustani music.

"She is known for her melodic and meditative style of singing and is recognised by a Padma Shri from the Indian government. She has also been training underprivileged children in music and contributing through her art to social causes," Mr. Murali said.

Her melodic voice secured her a place in Tamil film music. She first sang a duet with Malaysia Vasudevan in the film *Natpu* in the music of Ilaiyaraaja. Another famous duet is *Narumugaiye Narumgaiye* with Unnikrishnan for the film *Iruvar* in the music of A.R. Rahman.

Vasanthalakshmi Narasimhachari excels both in Bharathanatyam and Kuchipudi. "She is also a gifted linguist, lyricist and an accomplished *nattuvanar*. She learnt veena from Kamala Aswathama and dance from Adayar K. Lakshmanan and her late husband M.V. Narasimhachari with whom she paired in numerous performances," the press release from the academy said.

The Sangita Kala Acharya award goes to Carnatic vocalist Palkulangara Ambika Devi from Kerala and mridangam player K.S. Kalidas, a student of the late Palani M. Subramania Pillai. Noted thavil player and teacher Thirunageswaram has been selected for the TTK award. Another musician who will get the award is Sargunanatha Odhuvar of the Kapaleeswarar temple in Myalpore.

The musicologist award will be conferred on Arimalam S. Padmanabhan, who has been doing research in classical music, dance, theatre, folk music, and classical Tamil.

Mr. Murali said the Sangita Kalanidhi award nominee would preside over the academic sessions of the 97th annual conference and concerts of the academy between December 15, 2023, and January 1, 2024. The awards will be conferred on them on January 1, 2024, the day of Sadas. The Nritya Kalanidhi recipient will receive the award at the inauguration of the 17th annual dance festival on January 3.

BJP, Congress to keep up pressure on Telangana on paper leak

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Demanding an inquiry by a sitting Judge of the High Court or the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) paper leak, Telangana Congress president A. Revanth Reddy alleged that Municipal Minister K.T. Rama Rao's personal assistant, Tirupati, and one of the accused in the case, Rajshekhar Reddy, were friends and hailed from neighbouring villages, leading to suspicion about their collaboration.

Earlier, he held a day-long dharna at the same place demanding the Minister's resignation. "In fact, it was Tirupati who helped Rajshekhar get a job in the Telangana State Technological Services (TSTS) on outsourcing basis and ensured later that he lands a job in TSPSC in a key role," he alleged.

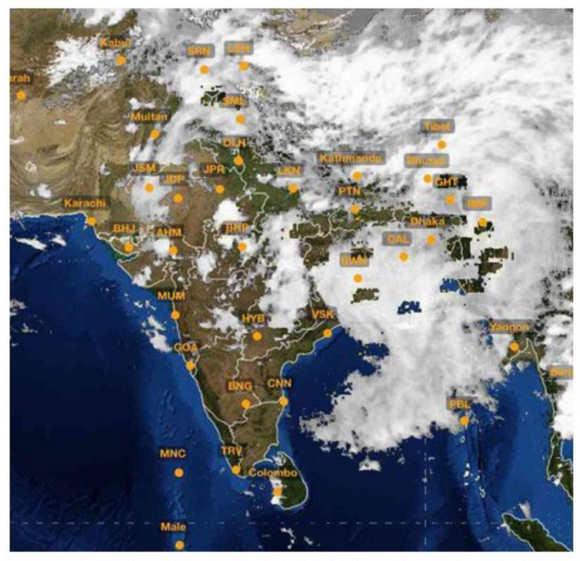
Demand of dismissal

The Telangana unit of BJP has decided to take up protests in all district headquarter towns across the State on Monday demanding the dismissal of K.T. Rama Rao, holding him directly responsible for the leak of question papers and also seeking ₹1 lakh to each of the affected aspirants.

Party president Bandi Sanjay Kumar called upon the cadre to take part in the protest programmes from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over south Assam, Meghalaya, Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	4.8	24.5	20.8	Kozhikode	—	36.4	26.5
Ahmedabad	—	32.7	18.1	Kurnool	—	34.6	22.0
Aizawl	—	21.7	—	Lucknow	—	29.6	15.5
Allahabad	—	32.2	16.6	Madurai	—	37.9	24.6
Bengaluru	0.1	32.6	21.0	Mangaluru	—	33.0	23.2
Bhopal	3.0	29.1	17.0	Mumbai	—	32.6	24.2
Bhubaneswar	15.4	26.5	19.5	Mysuru	—	34.2	—
Chandigarh	10.0	27.5	13.8	New Delhi	39.6	27.0	15.0
Chennai	—	31.8	22.0	Patna	5.0	27.6	19.2
Coimbatore	—	35.7	24.0	Port Blair	—	31.5	26.0
Dehradun	1.0	17.9	4.7	Puducherry	—	32.8	24.4
Gangtok	6.0	11.0	9.6	Pune	—	31.3	15.7
Goa	—	33.2	23.4	Raipur	4.0	26.5	17.6
Guwahati	7.0	21.2	18.9	Ranchi	6.0	24.2	19.2
Hubballi	—	33.0	16.0	Shillong	19.2	13.7	11.0
Hyderabad	19.0	29.2	18.0	Shimla	1.0	14.4	7.6
Imphal	—	22.5	13.5	Srinagar	0.2	17.1	5.5
Jaipur	—	28.2	18.3	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.2	25.6
Kochi	15.0	31.8	24.2	Tiruchi	2.0	36.2	25.4
Kohima	—	20.4	—	Vijayawada	15.0	29.7	22.2
Kolkata	2.0	26.5	21.6	Visakhapatnam	34.0	27.6	20.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing — Yesterday: NA

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	11	—	35	237	202	
Bengaluru	7	21	34	54	81	
Chennai	10	17	36	31	69	
Delhi	17	58	—	231	148	
Hyderabad	6	34	30	64	96	
Kolkata	5	28	49	82	71	
Lucknow	20	25	34	301	189	
Mumbai	30	204	91	199	153	
Pune	111	162	112	50	44	
Visakhapatnam	19	44	54	32	60	

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

EDUCATIONPLUS

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Beating the odds

Chetan Pashilkar, Priyanka Dabade, Mohit Majety and Bhagyashri Nadimetala speak of how they overcame their challenges to participate in the International Abilympics

Madhuvanti S Krishnan
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Chetan Pashilkar and Priyanka Dabade, both from Mumbai, are hearing impaired. Mohit Majety, from Vijaywada, has 45% locomotor disability while Bhagyashri Nadimetala from Pune lost her hearing when she was two, after an accident. What do they all have in common? The four students are part of the 13-member Divyangan contingent from India who will participate in the 10th International Abilympics, the global skills competition for PwD, to be held from March 23-26 at Metz, France.

Pashilkar will represent the country India in Painting and Decoration; Dabade in Embroidery; Majety in Photography (Outdoor), and Nadimetala in Dress-making (Basic). The four believe that an arts-based education, as part of mainstream learning, is essential. Pashilkar believes, "Arts gives a person a different lens to see the same thing and be accepting of it. To accept everyone's differences is important in today's world where everyone is so diverse and unique." Nadimetala adds, "In addition to mainstream learning, it gives a more rounded experience and maturity to individuals."

(Clockwise from above) Priyanka Dabade, Chetan Palshikar, Mohit Majety, Bhagyashri Nadimetala
GETTYIMAGES/ ISTOCKPHOTO AND SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Unfettered by limitations

Pashilkar recalls how he overcame his impairment and learnt sign language to overcome the communication setbacks. "During my schooling, I discovered a knack for sketching and realised that it was more than just a hobby and that I had a talent for the arts. To learn more and polish my skills, I completed my Master's in Fine Arts. For the International Abilympics, I am being trained online on a weekly basis by the faculty of Lady Irwin College. I also attended the offline training boot camp in Delhi last January." Dabade was 12 when she lost her father. "But, with my mother's support, I developed my drawing and painting skills. Now, I have completed a Diploma in Fashion Design and even a degree in Embroidery.

Nadimetala was determined to not let her hearing loss affect her. "I developed an interest in art and embroidery in Class 10. I started learning from a tailor; learnt sign language and pursued my Master's in Fine Arts."

Majety did not permit locomotor disability to obstruct his progress. While doing his B.Tech from IIT Kharagpur, he discovered a love for outdoor photography. "I started clicking pictures, and my friends and professors liked my work. The appreciation and motivation prompted me to pursue it further, and it became my passion."

Work in progress

In essence, inclusivity is the underlying theme of the Abilympics, says Dr. Jitendra Aggarwal of the Sarthak Educational Trust and general secretary of the National Abilympic Association of India. "According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in three out-of-school children are known to have a disability, and it is disappointing to see many of them drop out because of inaccessibility, lack of required resources, and social discrimination. This clearly signifies the importance of introducing a special measure to educate specially-abled children, who constitute a significant number in society. This also increases the importance of learning sign language along with basic subjects, to be able to communicate better and ultimately help them to be well educated and work in favour of their personal growth as well as for society's betterment."

Discrimination, stigmatisation, and lack of accessibility are still prevalent in many areas of society. But we have made progress in recent years

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, he points out, talks about using assistive devices and textbooks in accessible formats such as large print and Braille and identifying each student's unique capabilities to promote holistic development in both academic and non-academic sphere. "Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Programmes are also being offered by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and Special Education Zones (SEZs) to meet the learning needs of children with benchmark disabilities, who are unable to attend a physical school daily. The awareness of the importance of special education and the ways to teach children with specific disabilities has thus become an important part of the education system and programmes," he adds.

What about sensitising educational institutions towards PwD? India has made efforts to promote inclusivity and accessibility in various fields, says Pashilkkar. "However, there is still a long way to go to ensure that people with disabilities have equal opportunities to succeed and represent their country on the global stage. Discrimination, stigmatisation, and lack of accessibility are still prevalent in many areas of society. But we have made progress in recent years as athletes with disabilities such as Devendra Jhajharia, Deepa Malik, and Mariyappan Thangavelu have excelled at the international level."

WHAT ARE THE ABILYMPICS

Also called the Olympics of Abilities, the Abilympics allow persons with disabilities to prove their potential and talents in multiple domains including photography, web designing, painting, and, more.
Japan was the first to organise a vocational skills contest for PwD in 1972. The aim of Abilympics is to improve vocational skills of people with disabilities so that they can actively participate in socio-economic activities.

SCHOLARSHIPS

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Rewards: ₹10,000 per month and other benefits
Deadline: March 31
Application: Online
b4s.in/edge/TASD4

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

Spectre of stagflation

Higher credit costs may further dampen consumption

The latest global financial developments and recent economic data in India are together raising fears that several major economies worldwide, including India's, may be headed for a spell of debilitating stagflation. Last week's retail inflation reading for February from India's NSO, at 6.44%, clearly belies the RBI's most recent forecast for Q4 inflation of 5.7%. With January having logged CPI-based price gains of 6.52%, prices will have to soften so sharply in March as to drag the headline number down by more than 230 basis points to about 4.1% for the RBI's projection to come true. A look at the components driving inflation shows that core inflation, which strips out the impact of food and fuel prices, still remains stuck at 6.2% for a third straight month, and continues to hover almost at or above the 6% level since May 2021. That core inflation remains persistently elevated despite the RBI having raised its benchmark interest rate by 250 basis points since last May reveals the difficulty monetary authorities are facing in tamping down on price gains by increasing credit costs so as to dampen demand. Governor Shaktikanta Das and the RBI's two other members on the Monetary Policy Committee all cited the worrying persistence of core inflation at their last policy meeting in February as justification for deciding to continue tightening monetary policy.

Queering the pitch further is price gains across the food basket too showing disconcerting trends despite a marginal deceleration of five basis points last month in the composite food price index. Prices of four key categories in the food basket that together account for more than a fifth of the Consumer Price Index continued to register significantly high year-on-year inflation, as well as sequential hardening. If the key staple of cereals and products saw inflation accelerate to 16.7% in February, the headline reading for milk and products quickened to 9.65%, that for fruits surged to 6.38% (from January's 2.93%), with only the reading for spices slowing a tad to 20.2% (from 21.1%). With the prediction of a likely El Niño this year, the outlook for food prices is hardly reassuring. While policymakers will, therefore, need to stay focused on containing inflation, the rising uncertainty about the growth momentum sustaining in the face of the heightened risks of a recession in advanced economies raises the risk that higher credit costs may further dampen consumption. Yet, failure to engender enduring price stability could lead to stagflation. Unless supply side measures such as GST rationalisation and fuel price cuts are expedited, the overall macroeconomic outlook appears worrying.

Playing with fire

Kerala must discard centralised waste-processing, reduce its trash

The landfill fire in Brahmapuram, on March 2, has turned the spotlight on the State's ineffectual solid-waste management practices – from a widespread lack of waste segregation at source to discrepancies between contractors' actions to maintain the landfill and their obligations. This was not the first fire at Brahmapuram. Studies by the CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology, in 2019 and 2020, concluded that the many fires released highly toxic substances into their surroundings; they are also likely to have been released in this fire. These facts indicate two problems – solid waste accumulated at the site, and it was not removed quickly enough. And, also, two kinds of failure. First, Kochi's solid-waste management apparatus is too tenuous for the amount of waste it produces and the Brahmapuram waste-to-energy plant is dysfunctional. The former is a pan-India problem, due to overconsumption, low resource-use efficiency, and not handling such waste properly. Solid waste can be biodegradable, when it is composted, or nonbiodegradable, when it is repurposed, combusted, or landfilled. Such waste does not go anywhere else; so, if any of these three channels are clogged, waste will collect in the others. This is why landfills are signs of urban dysfunction. The second kind has to do with waste not being removed efficiently from stockpiles – by feeding it into waste-to-energy plants and by recovering commercially important metals, refuse-derived fuel, and bio-soil – and by storing the flammable waste in a way that would not prevent fires.

The Brahmapuram plant appears to have been in the State's blind spot. Such facilities work only when the relatively more expensive power they produce will be purchased; the amount of combustible waste they receive is proportional to the amount of purchasable power they can produce; and the waste they receive has sufficient caloric content to produce that power. The plant is dysfunctional: the State must explain why and revive it. Also needed are answers about the landfilling and biomining contracts, why contractors failed their obligations, and why course-correction was not effected sooner. It is of concern that the State overlooked Supreme Court and National Green Tribunal orders to prevent such fires. Corruption in the face of the climate crisis beggars cynicism. Finally, Kerala needs to discard centralised waste-processing in favour of the decentralised mode encouraged by its Solid Waste Management Policy. The State is unlikely to meet its goal of being waste-free by 2026 if it does not achieve its circular economies, which it will not unless its trash mountains dwindle instead of becoming climate pollutants in their own right.

Slow steps to India-China border tranquillity

Manoj Joshi

is a Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, and the author of 'Understanding the India-China Border: The Enduring Threat of War in High Himalaya'

India and China appear to be moving towards a new *modus vivendi* to maintain peace and tranquillity along their disputed 4,000 kilometre border. In 2020, the older arrangements, shaped by the agreements of 1993, 1996, 2005 and 2013, came apart in Ladakh after the Chinese massed troops in Tibet and established blockades at six points on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to prevent Indian troops from patrolling the border.

A clash at Galwan in June 2020 led to the deaths of 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers, the first such losses on the LAC since 1975. The Sino-Indian clash, in December 2022, at Yangtse, north-east of Tawang, suggests that new measures may be needed across the LAC, and not just in Ladakh.

Attempts to ease the border situation

There are reported to have been important discussions that took place when Shilpak Ambule, Joint Secretary of the East Asia Division of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and the Office of the External Affairs Minister, and Hong Liang, Director-General of the Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China, met in Beijing for the 26th Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on China-India Border Affairs, on February 22, 2023. This was the first in-person meeting of the WMCC that had held the previous 11 rounds since the 2020 events by video conference.

In the last three years, through patient negotiation, the two sides managed to disengage in four of the six points – Galwan, Pangong Tso, Gogra Post and near Jianan Pass (PP15). But two key areas remain unsettled, i.e., the Depsang Bulge and the Charding Ninglung Junction in the Demchok area involving nearly 1,000 square kilometres.

The Indian press release after the meeting said the proposals for disengagement in the "remaining areas" were discussed "in an open and constructive manner" which could "create conditions for restoration of normalcy in bilateral relations".

The Chinese release, which was slightly more forthcoming, spoke of the "achievements made in the disengagement of border troops of the two countries at four locations including Galwan Valley" and that the two sides would work along "established lines" and settle the remaining issues on the western boundary. But, more significantly, it said that "the two sides discussed other measures to further ease the border situation, and agreed to make efforts in promoting the border situation to the phase of normalized management and control".

> Meetings have been taking place, but if China seeks to use the lack of precision of the Line of Actual Control to keep India off balance, little will change

What could these "other measures" be that could restore a measure of normality to the situation so badly roiled by the events of 2020?

While several proposals have been discussed, the most likely one (based on the experience of the last three years) is about converting other parts of the LAC into similar no-patrol zones. Immediately, this could lead to a package settlement in the two remaining areas of Depsang and Charding Nala. The discussions have also reportedly taken up the issue of upgrading the border management means to replace the WMCC with a mechanism that will have both military and civilian officers.

The entire range of confidence-building measures since 1993 was premised on the belief that both sides largely accepted the lay of the LAC, though they had differences that related to some 18-20 points on it. The 1993 and 1996 agreements specifically spoke about the importance of identifying and resolving these differences. But as the decade wore on, the Chinese walked back on the task of defining a clear LAC without providing any good reasons; the result was that Indian and Chinese patrols sometimes ended up resorting to pushing, shoving and even fisticuffs and stone-throwing. And then there was 2020.

On no-patrol zones

It is likely that the no-patrol zones could be confined to the places where the two sides have overlapping claims. Till 2020, both sides patrolled till the limit of these contending claims and there was a protocol that if the two patrols met, they would stop and display banners to ask the other side to go back to their area. Thereafter, the issue was dealt with through meetings at one of the five designated border meeting points.

In an article in an Indian publication in 2020, Chinese journalist-scholar Qian Feng suggested that the concept of the "zone of actual control" could replace the "line of actual control" in some areas that had no obvious geomorphological features or population. Other areas, too, could be delimited as a "border belt" if they did not require population adjustment. But whether or not the idea works will depend on the intentions of the two interlocutors. If the Chinese seek to use the lack of precision of the LAC to keep India off balance, little will change.

The idea is actually an echo of the original proposal by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai following a similar set of circumstances we are experiencing today. In October 1959, an Indian police party was ambushed at Kongka La leading to the deaths of 10 personnel and the capture of another dozen.

There was an uproar and to quieten it, Zhou proposed to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in a letter of November 7, 1959 that both sides withdraw 20 kilometres from the "so called" McMahon Line, as well as the "line up to which each side exercises control in the west".

Shifting the goalposts

Just to which point the Chinese exercised "control in the west" at that time, or even now, has never been clear as no detailed maps have ever been made available. And that has been at the root of the problem. Over the years, the Chinese have been able to shift goalposts at will, especially in relation to the Ladakh border.

Despite tensions, Indian and Chinese Ministers and officials have been meeting with each other regularly; India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met his Chinese counterpart Qin Gang earlier this month on the sidelines of the G-20 Foreign Ministers meeting in New Delhi.

In March 2022, Mr. Qin's predecessor, Wang Yi, visited New Delhi, ostensibly to discuss issues relating to Ukraine. In his meetings with Mr. Wang, Mr. Jaishankar emphasised the point that there could be no normality in India-China ties until the eastern Ladakh situation was resolved. Last week he said that the Chinese inability to deliver on what the two sides had agreed on in 2020 had left their ties "fragile" and "quite dangerous".

In 2014 and 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tried his level best to persuade the Chinese to clarify the LAC at the points where there were differences. The Chinese ignored his proposals. Events in 2020 have destroyed the trust that was built up with patience between 1993 and 2020. The bar for normality in China-India relations is now much higher.

Moving forward with a newer concept of UHC

Dr. K.R. Antony

is Independent Monitor, National Health Mission, Government of India, a former Director, State Health Resource Centre, Chhattisgarh, and a former Health and Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF, India

Do we believe in health as a basic human right, which India's Constitution guarantees under right to life? In contrast, we believe in the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health: a certain totality of health to the realms of mental and social well-being and happiness beyond physical fitness, and an absence of disease and disability. This means that we cannot achieve health in its wider definition without addressing health determinants. This necessitates a need for an intersectoral convergence beyond medical and health departments such as women and child development, food and nutrition, agriculture and animal husbandry, civil supplies, rural water supply and sanitation, social welfare, tribal welfare, education, forestry.

We all subscribed to the slogan "Health for All by 2000" that was proposed by Halfdan Mahler and endorsed by the World Health Assembly in 1977. This slogan had an inherent implication, i.e., "for All", which means universalisation. Thus, nobody is denied this and everybody is eligible without being discriminated against on the basis of financial status, gender, race, place of residence, affordability to pay or any other factors. Universal Health Care/coverage (UHC) was implied as early as 1977. India, through its National Health Policy 1983, committed itself to the 'Health for All' goal by 2000.

A focus on primary care

When and where then did partial coverage of the population and partial responsibility of the ruling government to pay for health care come in? The International Conference on Primary Health Care, at Alma Ata, 1978, listed eight components of minimum care for all citizens. It mandated all health promotion activities, and the prevention of diseases including vaccinations and treatment of minor illnesses and accidents to be free for all using government resources, especially for the poor. Any non-communicable disease, chronic disease including mental illnesses, and its investigations and treatment were almost excluded from primary health care. When it came to secondary and tertiary care, it was left to the individual to either seek it from a limited number of public hospitals or from the private sector by paying from their own pockets. There were not enough government-run institutions for the poor (who cannot afford exploitative and expensive private care). This abdication of responsibility, i.e., to provide secondary or tertiary care by the state, ensured the dominant, unregulated, profit-making private sector and also health insurance sector were kept happy and thriving. This created a dichotomy between peripheral primary and institutional-referred specialist care at the secondary and tertiary levels.

> It must encompass primary, secondary and tertiary care for all who need it, and at affordable cost without discrimination

Looking ahead

Realising that even the poor do contract chronic illnesses and non-communicable diseases such as cardiac, neural, mental and metabolic disorders, and also require investigations and management at peripheral primary health institutions, a Primary Health Care (PHC) Version 2 or Comprehensive PHC was defined. A sensible move, it was operationalised through the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in India from 2013. The second half of the last decade saw the operationalisation of the Health and Wellness Centre as a model of implementation of Comprehensive Primary Health Care.

Every individual has a right to be healed and not have complications, disability and death. That right is guaranteed only by individualism in public health, the new global approach to UHC, where "nobody is left uncounted and uncared for".

The Alma Ata declaration of primary health care can be left behind as a beautiful edifice of past concepts. Let us move forward with a newer concept of UHC which encompasses primary, secondary and tertiary care for all who need it at affordable cost without discrimination.

The Universal Health Coverage slogan must be avoided as it is deceptive. This is because it is neither universal in its implementation nor comprehensive in its coverage of services and never assures accessibility or affordability as its financing is conditional to insurance premiums paid either by the individual or state. WHO should not have yielded to the World Bank and the Rockefeller Foundation during the period of 2004-2010 towards pro-market driven reform guidelines such as reducing state regulation and selectivity of uneconomical service coverages. This backtrack from "Health For All" dilutes the UHC concept. However, the consolation is that the World Health Assembly resolution of 2011, urges countries for timely finance of the health sector to reduce out-of-pocket expenses and a catastrophic expenditure in health resulting in the impoverishment of families.

The Astana declaration of 2018 calls for "partnership" with the private sector, though alcohol, tobacco, ultra-processed foods, and industrial and automobile pollution contributed by the commercial private sector are well established. Also, poorer countries miserably fail or are unwilling for "private sector regulation". It never addressed poverty, unemployment and poor livelihood, but eulogises quality PHC only as the cornerstone for Universal Health Coverage and ignores broader Universal Health Care.

A globally accepted health systems concept since the Beijing Health Systems Research Conference 2012 is that of a multi-nodal system of varied sectors, professional streams and specialities with a variety of staff to deliver Comprehensive Universal Health Care.

The National Health Mission with concurrent intersectoral thrusts on Poshan Abhiyan, National Food Security, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, water sanitation, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, etc. is a better model of fully tax-funded Universal Health Care, but the Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Bhima Yojana damages that approach.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On the run

Although dormant for a while, the 'Khalistan volcano' appears to be smouldering, indicating that the influence of divisive tendency has not been done and dusted with. Unless dealt with alacrity and utmost sensitivity, things in Punjab might take an ugly turn. Viewing the attack on a Amritsar police station as merely a law and order problem is too simplistic.

Ayyasseri Raveendranath,
Aranmula, Kerala

The cat and mouse game between the Punjab police and pro-Khalistan groups is strange. The State and Centre are culpable as they have allowed the grass to grow and the situation has reached a disturbing and ugly pass (Page 1, "Punjab Police launch hunt for pro-Khalistan preacher Amritpal Singh; 78 arrested", March 19). This is belated action against the 'separatist group'. It is time the Centre and the State sink their differences and rise above petty politics.

Deepak Singhal,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

At last the Punjab police have begun to act, belated no doubt, against seditious elements. However, this late action underlines the fault lines in the polity of the State and also the Centre. One cannot forget the price we had to pay for not acting in time in the early 1980s. Let the message go out that a true democracy will not tolerate sedition, more so sedition with religious overtones.

Srinivas Gade,
Chennai

As the 'other'

All political parties are responsible for creating and perpetuating a climate of fear directed at hard-working labourers from other parts of the country working in Tamil Nadu. There has been a substratum of hatred that has now morphed itself into an ugliness that is directed at the poor victims of economic dislocation, who leave their homes and families in order to make a living. What is even more disturbing is the use of the catchphrase "migrants" to label these citizens of India as the "other". An engineer or doctor or other professional moving to another area of the country seeking economic betterment is seldom called by this moniker. The existential reality in many southern States is that these hard-working citizens of India, primarily from the eastern and northeastern States, form the backbone that anchors the business community's daily labour needs. They should be treated with respect and not used as commodities while scoring political points.

G. Parameswaran,
Coimbatore

The COVID-19 pandemic showed how the urban-centric economy of India is dependent on low-paid migrant workers. Migrant workers in India could become the key to India's development in the next decade.

Nita Mishra,
Asansol, West Bengal

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Don't gobblefunk around with words

Radhika Santhanam

radhika.s@thehindu.co.in

No one would argue with the fact that Roald Dahl was plain mean. In his books, little children are eaten by giants, thrown into garbage chutes and hated by witches, and wives feed their husbands worms. Dahl also suffers the reputation of being racist and flagrantly anti-Semitic. Nevertheless, his books remain popular, and he is celebrated as one of the most prodigious and imaginative children's writers. It was, therefore, unsurprising that Dahl's publisher Puffin, the children's imprint of Penguin Random House, came under fire last month for rewriting portions deemed offensive so that the books "can be continued to be enjoyed by all today." The portions changed contain references to race, weight, gender and mental health. Struggling to deal with the backlash, Puffin then hastened to say that it would release his works in their original version along with the changed versions for younger readers "who may be navigating written content independently for the first time."

Altering old books

Regardless of this clarification, even in this age of political correctness, the idea that a group of editors can change works without the consent of writers long gone is worrying. Publishers are supposed to be the defenders and custodians of the works they publish and to promote rewriting or censoring of any kind amounts to a betrayal of this responsibility and the trust reposed in them. While publishers and copyright-holders attempt edits so that older books can be read by newer, more sensitive readers while they can continue to profit from these classic works, 'sensitivity readings' make sense in the case of new works, not books published decades ago. To attempt to improve on the present is distinctly different from trying to alter the past.

There is also no evidence that such changes are accepted by readers. And acceptance is important, for publishing is first and foremost a business. In 2010, for instance, Hachette had announced that Enid Blyton's works would get a 21st century makeover. Old-fashioned words were changed: 'housemistress' become 'teacher', 'tunic' became 'school uniform', and even 'mercy me' became 'oh, no', so that the books would become more "timeless." In 2016, *The Guardian* reported that this had turned out to be a pointless exercise; the response was lukewarm at best. The message from the readers was clear: Blyton's books were timeless, and her legacy was too great to be tampered with. Readers seemed to be buying books because they were by Enid Blyton – with the insults, nastiness and anachronistic language – and not some versions of Blyton. They preferred authenticity over political correctness.

While it could be argued that several classic children's books have been updated to remove racial and gender stereotypes, such as Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and Hugh Lofting's *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*, none of these versions have changed who these writers were or their imagination of the world. It is through the original books that we have some understanding of the prejudices, cultural attitudes and behaviour of the times in which they were written. Works are a product of their times and reading them is simply a way of knowing the truth.

Furthermore, to determine which books should be rewritten, which portions should be recast, what is offensive, and who should do the rewriting is an exercise fraught with difficulties. Books, it is argued, are updated to reflect the mores of the times, but even mores are not set in stone: they are contentious, vary across geographies and cultures, and are fast evolving.

The graver danger is that if fiction is altered or tailored according to arbitrary moral judgments, this could happen with non-fiction too, especially history, which is always being sought to be rewritten to suit the ideology of the time. In India, we already see this in the field of education. The popular majoritarian rhetoric rides on the vilification of some and the glorification of an earlier past. School textbooks are changed; heroes and villains are recast. These changes, too, are directed at children. It seems that there is a stubborn refusal to challenge children in the realm of ideas worldwide.

Reading a range of books

So, how can we challenge children in the realm of ideas? One way would be to introduce them to different kinds of reading. Philip Pullman had rightly suggested that we should simply let "Dahl's books go out of print," while introducing children to other writers such as Michael Morpurgo, Malorie Blackman and Jaqueline Wilson. In fact, we should do more: in this age where writers from different cultures, communities, genders and languages are being read, and translated fiction is in vogue, children have the opportunity of exploring a range of books. Second, in older works, publishers could introduce an introductory paragraph providing some context, which would help children and parents understand the times in which those books were written. Third, instead of rewriting books, publishers could encourage retelling of works. For instance, Wilson re-imagines Susan Coolidge's classic book, *What Katy Did*, in *Katy*. While in the original, Katy is confined to a wheelchair and denied happiness, *Katy* has a different ending and says a lot about disability.

The uproar over edits is especially loud in the case of children's books as they evoke feelings of childhood and nostalgia. Instead of dusting up old books, softening the cruelty in them, and, as Dahl said, trying to "gobblefunk around with words," it would make more sense to re-centre children's literature so that it doesn't revolve only around the Dahls and Blytons.

Instead of rewriting old children's books, publishers could encourage reimagined works

A dump fire that raises a stink

The smoke from Brahmapuram has cleared, but the concerns it fuelled remain

STATE OF PLAY

S. Anandan

The March 2 fire at Brahmapuram was not the first at the waste processing plant – a euphemism for a sprawling 110-acre open dumping yard with a failed windrow composting facility and a yet-to-begin waste-to-energy plant. The yard has been witnessing fire outbreaks at almost the same time every year in the last few years. The Kochi Municipal Corporation, which runs the plant, initially provided a typically listless response. But this proved calamitous as the blaze raged on and a blanket of fetid smoke soon shrouded the city and nearby areas.

There was no dearth of warnings about this impending disaster. When it followed up on a major fire incident in 2019, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had found glaring lapses in solid waste handling at the site and had asked the State to show urgency in clearing the 'legacy' waste at Brahmapuram. As per a 2021 estimate, Brahmapuram had about 5.5 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste dumped over an area of 40 acres.

In May last year, the Kerala government told the South Zone Bench of the NGT that Zonta Infra Tech Private Limited had begun the process of 'biomining' – segregation and conversion of old dump yard waste into reusable resources – at Brahmapuram in January 2022, and that 28% of the work was over by May.

But with talks veering towards a new waste-to-energy plant at the site, which would require a regular supply of huge quantities of waste, the Kochi Municipal Corporation slipped into a slumber and failed to ensure that the fire

hydrants at the yard remained operational. This along with the toxic smoke emanating from the mounds of garbage proved to be a double whammy for the firefighters.

It is small wonder that the State Pollution Control Board has now imposed a fine of ₹1.8 crore on the Municipal Corporation. The NGT, on its part, asked the civic body to deposit a penalty of ₹100 crore with the Chief Secretary. Meanwhile, the State government launched a health survey in the smoke-hit areas of Kochi.

But there are deeper concerns about prolonged exposure to compounds such as dioxins that are carcinogenic. When the Thiruvananthapuram-based National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology conducted studies at Brahmapuram in the aftermath of the fire episodes in 2019 and 2020, alarming levels of dioxin were detected in the air. The institute recommended a deeper study of environmental contamination – in soil, sediment, and water – in and around Brahmapuram. Delaying such a study is inexcusable.

The yard is located in a land-filled wetland abutting a river, which supplies drinking water to a few panchayats in the vicinity, and leachate from the garbage has already polluted the Kadambrayar river. The landfill is where more than half a dozen local bodies dump their waste. A fair share of the 326 tonnes of refuse generated by Kochi daily makes it to the landfill.

The latest fire has triggered a political blame game and allegations of corruption in awarding the contract for biomining. A High Court-appointed committee audited the yard premises and found the facilities inadequate. The crisis has given an opportunity to the State administration to review its waste management practices and replicate in Kochi what it has tried out with a great degree of success elsewhere – decentralised management of waste. This would mean processing biodegradable waste in situ (at home) to the extent possible, with the rest treated at community-level treatment facilities. Thiruvananthapuram and Alappuzha have already made strides in this direction and several former dumping yards in the State have been turned into recreational public spaces.

A move in the right direction in the aftermath of the fire, as enunciated by the Chief Minister, is augmenting the Haritha Karma Sena (green army of volunteers) for 100% collection of plastic and other non-biodegradable refuse for safe disposal and recycling under the public sector Clean Kerala Company. The key to good waste management practice is the segregation of waste into as many categories as possible at all levels so that it is easy to handle.

In the backdrop of Brahmapuram, biomining at the nearly 50 garbage dumping sites in the State is set to gather momentum. But what's concerning is the government's resolve to go ahead with unproven, polluting, and unviable solutions such as waste-to-energy plants which Kerala can do without.

India's democratic values have eroded significantly: V-Dem

The debate around India's erosion of democratic values has surfaced again after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's remarks in the U.K.

DATA POINT

Vignesh Radhakrishnan

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi delivered a lecture titled 'Learning to Listen in the 21st Century' at the University of Cambridge on February 28, 2023. He stated that there were constraints on the institutional framework required for a democratic Parliament, free press and judiciary in India. The Bharatiya Janata Party demanded an apology from Mr. Gandhi for his comments. This is also one of the reasons why Parliament is in a logjam.

The crux of the debate is whether or not India's democratic values have eroded in recent years. Data from the V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) Institute at Sweden's University of Gothenburg show that democratic values have eroded significantly in recent years in India.

Chart 1 depicts five indexes used by V-Dem to capture democratic values in India. The deliberative democracy index measures whether political decisions are made through public reasoning or emotional appeals and coercion. The egalitarian democracy index examines equal access to rights and liberties. The electoral democracy index evaluates election cleanliness and lack of fraud. The liberal democracy index measures protection of individual and minority rights against state tyranny. The participatory democracy index measures active citizen engagement in electoral and non-electoral political processes. In all these indexes, 0 is the lowest value and 1 the highest. As shown in the chart, the values of these indexes have been declining since 2014. In 2022, they reached the levels last seen during the 1975 Emergency.

Chart 2 depicts four indexes which measure the change in digital society variables over time. In 2022, a citizen is "likely" to be arrested for posting political content online which is critical of the government as India's score stood at 1.05 (0: extremely likely; 1: likely; 2: unlikely; 3: extremely unlikely). In 2022, the government "sometimes" shut down domestic access to the Internet as the score stood at 1.98 (0: extremely often; to 4: almost never). In 2022, the government censored political information on the Internet "sometimes" to "often." India's score in this stood at 1.45 (0: extremely often to 4: almost never). Also, the government and its agents used social media "about half the time" to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence its own population in 2022. India's score was 1.68 (0: extremely often to 4: never or almost never). All the lines have declined steeply post 2014 as seen in the chart.

In **Chart 3,** the media bias index in India stood at 2.3 in 2022, on a scale of 0 (highly biased towards the government) to 4 (impartial coverage). In 2022, the harassment of journalists index stood at 1.5 on a scale of 0 (no journalists dare to engage in critical coverage) to 1 (never harassed). On the index that measures how many major print and broadcast outlets routinely criticise the government, India scored 1.96 (where 0 is none to 4 showing all outlets). In the index that measures whether the government directly or indirectly attempts to censor the print or broadcast media, India scored 1.48 where 0 indicates routinely and 4 means rarely. The chart shows that press freedom has eroded in India in recent years.

Chart 4 plots the liberal democracy index in 2014 and 2022 on a scatter chart. The red dots correspond to nations whose values eroded, the blue dots are countries which recorded increases in democratic values and the rest remained more or less the same. India is among the countries which recorded significant erosion in this period along with Greece, Brazil, Poland and the Philippines.

Barometer of democracy

The charts are based on data from the V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) Institute at Sweden's University of Gothenburg

Chart 1 | The chart depicts five indexes used by V-Dem to capture democratic values in India

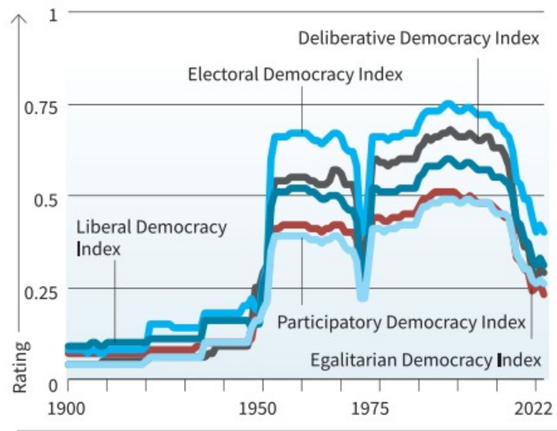


Chart 3 | The chart shows that press freedom has eroded in India in recent years

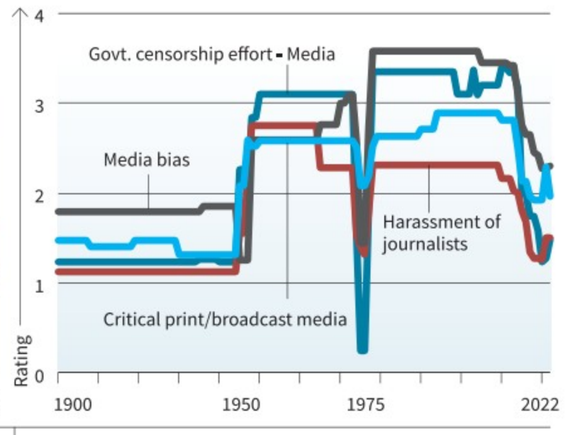


Chart 2 | The chart depicts four indexes which measure the change in digital society variables over time

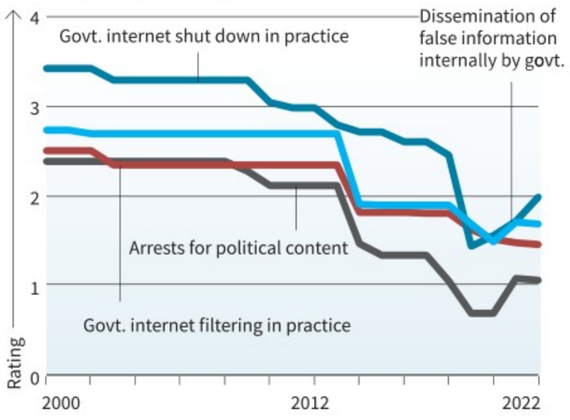
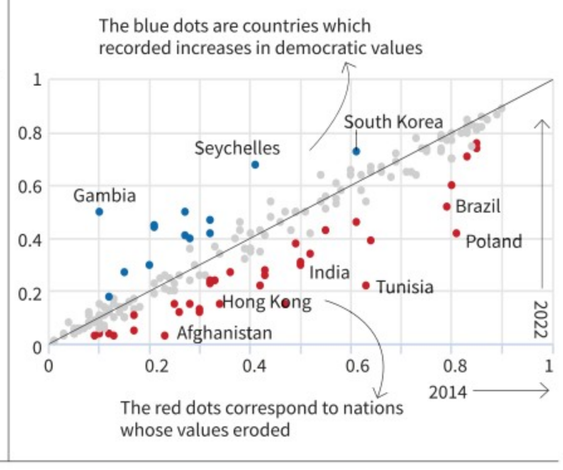


Chart 4 | The chart plots the liberal democracy index in 2014 and 2022 of various countries



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 20, 1973

Biggest currency racket unearthed in Egypt

Cairo, March 19: Egypt's Security Intelligence has exposed what it claims is the "biggest illegal currency operation in Egyptian history," arresting 65 Egyptians and foreigners, it was reported today. Americans, West Germans, Jews, Italians, French, Greeks and Lebanese are said to be involved in the four-year-old operation which undertook transactions in excess of seven million Egyptian pounds, according to the newspaper, "Al Ahram." The international network, which carried an "organised campaign to wreck the Egyptian economy through cartels, manipulation of imports and prices, and cheating the State of large foreign currency amounts," is allegedly headed by Vittorio Antonio Sherio, a 61-year-old Italian Engineer residing in Cairo. His agents and clients, who were mentioned by name, included employees of foreign firms and Egyptian businessmen. Some foreign oil companies, operating in Egypt, were said to be a major arena for the illegal activities. A Jew under arrest, Albert Avadio Salem, was described as the son of "one of the founders of Israel, and the brother of the owner of Viscount Bank in Switzerland," one of the foreign organisations allegedly involved in the network. He was accused of having helped to smuggle amounts belonging to Jewish families who emigrated from Egypt. Those implicated in the case come from various circles in Egypt, including diplomats, West German nationals and experts, jewellers, travel agents and private sector executives, the account said.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 20, 1923

Tagore at Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad, Mar. 18: Addressing the members of the Gujarat Sabha last night in Seth Ambalal's bungalow in Shahibag Dr. Rabindranath Tagore said that he had opened a guest house (Viswabharathi) for the homeless wanderers of the world. The West was not less suffering from poverty than the East. The speaker was therefore received in the West with warmth which had never been accorded even to kings and emperors. The West was looking to the East for higher ideals of life. Would they shut themselves and refuse to give what they had? Their salvation lay not in dependence but interdependence.

From Page One

Amritpal elusive, 34 more followers arrested

Text messaging services, excluding those related to banking and mobile recharging, and all dongle internet services provided on mobile networks also remained suspended. The police and paramilitary forces conducted flag marches in sensitive areas to keep a check on anti-social elements. Prohibitory orders were also imposed.

"Law and order situation is fully under control. Request citizens not to panic or spread fake news or hate speech," the Punjab Police tweeted. Heavy security arrangements were made around the residence of the radical preacher in the Jallupur Khera village of Amritsar. In another development, Mr. Singh's close friend and alleged financer, Daljeet Singh Halsi, was arrested from Gurugram in Haryana. According to a security agency official, a close watch was being kept on WPD supporters who were protesting against the massive police clampdown during which 78 people were arrested on Saturday. Mr. Singh's cavalcade was also intercepted and seven of his associates were arrested on the Shahkot-Malsian Road in Jalandhar, following a long chase.

However, the WPD chief allegedly gave the police the slip after his aides deliberately crashed their vehicles into some motorcycles on a narrow road to divert attention. Those arrested were identified as Ajaypal Singh, Bajinder Singh, Gurvir Singh, Gurlal Singh, Harminder Singh, Savreet Singh and Amandeep Singh. The police seized their weapons and two vehicles on the spot.

Moved to Assam

On Sunday, four of Mr. Singh's aides were taken to eastern Assam's Dibrugarh by a special Air Force flight. A 27-member team of the Punjab Police, led by SP Tejbir Singh Hundal, accompanied them. "They have been brought to Assam for security reasons. The four are likely to be lodged in the Dibrugarh central jail for the time being," a senior district police officer said.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma assured adequate security for the arrested quartet, even while playing down the scale of the operation. "It is not unusual for people arrested in one State to be jailed in another as there is a certain level of coordination among all security agencies in the country," he said.

State-Centre collaboration

It is learnt that the crackdown on Mr. Singh and his supporters was meticulously planned by the State police in coordination with Central agencies, based on inputs about his links with several wanted terrorists and Khalistani sympathisers operating from outside the country. As part of the measures taken a few days ago to maintain peace, the authorities ensured that Twitter suspended over 60 major accounts that ran propaganda in the preacher's support. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who had discussed the law and order situation with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on March 2 in this regard and was assured that all possible assistance would be given, had recently alleged that the radical preacher was being funded from overseas and Pakistan. Now declared a fugitive, the accused had been indulging in hate speeches and glorified use of weapons.

The agencies have been investigating Mr. Singh's suspected association with elements backed by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence. He had earlier worked as a truck driver in Dubai, where he had shifted in 2012, returning to Punjab only in August last year. Subsequently, he was anointed WPD chief in Moga's Rode village, the ancestral place of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who was killed in 1984. The WPD head "deliberately" copied the mannerisms and attire of Bhindrawale, projecting himself as his successor, it is alleged. Mr. Singh had formed an Anandpur Khalsa Force (AKF) whose members carried weapons. The acronym 'AKF' was found written at the entrance gate of his house and on the seized firearms as well, indicating that he allegedly planned to raise a militia.

The agencies suspect that the U.K.-based Avtar Singh Khanda, a close associate of Khalistani terrorist Jagtar Singh Tara, is his main handler.

(Inputs from Rahul Karmakar)

'Congress should decide its role in Opposition'

"Any political party which is opposed to them [BJP], the ED, CBI and Income Tax is after them," he said. After West Bengal, if political activists are targeted most by the Central agencies in any other State, it is in Uttar Pradesh, he added.

Mr. Yadav raised the demand for a caste-based census, and said neither the BJP nor the Congress favours the exercise. He alleged that the UPA-2 regime had promised to conduct a caste census but later "backtracked". "We want the BJP-led Central government to conduct the caste census. Several leaders have been demanding it. But like the Congress, the saffron party is also not keen on conducting it," he claimed.

During the interaction, Mr. Yadav came down heavily on the Uttar Pradesh government on a host of issues, including fake encounters, custodial deaths in the State and the electricity crisis.

"Whenever these fake encounters [are] probed, a number of officials will find themselves in the dock," he said.

Mr. Yadav said that since Uttar Pradesh was the biggest State in the country, it had helped the BJP to assume power in the Centre twice. He expressed hope that after the national executive committee meeting of the SP, the party – along with its allies – will try to defeat the BJP in all the 80 Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh.

Security cover to Patel not 'intel failure', say J&K Police

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Police on Sunday described the measure to provide security cover to Kiran Patel, an alleged conman who posed as an official from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), as "a mistake and not an intelligence failure".

Additional Director-General of Police (Kashmir Zone) Vijay Kumar, however, admitted of carelessness on the part of field officers. He said the case was not of intelligence failure but a mistake, "which is being investigated".

Mr. Kumar said the alleged conman was caught red-handed on March 2 in Srinagar and fake visiting cards were seized from him. "A case was registered immediately. He [Mr. Patel] was in police remand for 14 days and now sent to judicial custody...No one involved will be spared," Mr. Kumar said.

Mr. Patel, who first visited Kashmir in October last year, impersonated as the Additional Director, Strategy and Campaigns in the PMO. He was granted a stay in a five-star hotel in Srinagar. He even held meetings with local officials and visited sensitive areas close to the Line of Control in north Kashmir.

Amid heat over Adani stocks, NSE says all its decisions 'transparent'

The National Stock Exchange, in a statement, defends its indexing and surveillance moves, says there is 'no human discretion in deciding on inclusion or exclusion of stocks in any of its indices'

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) late on Sunday issued a three-page statement to assert that its surveillance actions on individual stocks and decisions to include or exclude stocks in various Nifty indices are driven by "transparent" policies and rules without "human discretion".

The statement comes two days after the exchange removed three Adani Group stocks, including its flagship Adani Enterprises, from its short-term additional surveillance framework. Stocks are put under the additional surveillance framework by exchanges to safeguard investors amid high volatility.

The NSE statement also sought to defend its subsidiary NSE Indices' decisions, and said there was "no human discretion in deciding on inclusion or exclusion of stocks in any of its indices".

Police personnel standing outside the NSE during the Congress party's protest against the Adani Group in Bandra on March 1. PTI

Last month, the subsidiary had announced the addition of five Adani Group firms into 14 of its indices, effective March 30, while retaining Adani Enterprises and Adani Ports and SEZ in its flagship Nifty 50 index.

While the reconstitution of the indices was based on trading data for the six-month period ending January 31, financial experts had sought a review of the move to protect investor interest in the midst of the meltdown in the Group's stocks since January 24, when U.S.-based Hindenburg Research released a report alleging several misdemeanours by the Group.

"NSE surveillance actions on eligible stocks are applicable as per transparent rules. These rules are non-discretionary, pre-announced and automatically applicable," the exchange said, adding the norms were in the public domain, "common across exchanges" and were "implemented automatically and no human discretion is allowed". The exchange also underlined that "the overall Risk Management Framework put in place for trading in secondary market has been designed to provide robustness to capital market ecosystem, especially in volatile times".

"Similarly, inclusion and exclusion of stocks in various Nifty indices on periodic basis has been as per transparent policies," it said.

Asserting that the subsidiary followed "a strong index governance practise through various governance committees to monitor index criteria policy changes or policies related to index constituent changes", the NSE said these committees also included external independent members. "Thus given the current pre-announced, transparent, rules based, automatic, non discretionary regulatory framework for surveillance measures and for index inclusion/ exclusion at NSE, no human discretion is possible," the NSE underlined.

Late last month, the Congress had protested outside the NSE headquarters against the move to include and retain Adani Group stocks in its indices.

Centre yet to fulfil promises it made to farmers: SKM

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Sixteen months after the Union government agreed to repeal the three contentious farm laws that brought an end to the massive year-long farmers' protest on the borders of Delhi, the group that led the agitation plans to reconvene a gathering at the Ramlila Maidan on Monday to remind the government of the unfulfilled promises it made to the protesters in November 2021.

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha will hold a *kisan mahapanchayat*, or a large gathering of farmers, to demand that the Centre fulfil its commitments regarding a law to ensure minimum support price for all crops, and to withdraw cases filed against the protesters during the agitation.

"The farm laws were withdrawn, but if the Centre continues to ignore the assurances given to us at the time of suspension of the agitation, we will strengthen the protests. The *mahapanchayat* will be the beginning of the next round of nationwide protests," senior SKM leader Hannan Mollah, who is also the vice-president of Left-aligned All India Kisan Sabha, told journalists on Sunday.

Crude price slump a boost for oil firms, not consumers

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

With global crude oil prices slipping below $75 per barrel last week, Indian oil marketing companies (OMCs) are now making a profit of ₹11.1 per litre on diesel and ₹8.7 per litre on petrol, but consumers hoping for a price cut amid high inflation are unlikely to get any relief soon.

Analysts believe OMCs will need two or three quarters of such profits to recoup losses incurred through 2022 as they had frozen retail prices since May 2022, when the government had cut the excise duty on both fuels.

The three OMCs – Indian Oil (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL) – have incurred losses of ₹18,622 crore between April and December 2022, the Petroleum Ministry told Parliament last week, noting petrol and diesel prices have not been increased despite record high international prices.

From an average of $105 a barrel in the first half of 2022-23, Brent crude oil prices averaged $85 per barrel between October 2022 and February, Moody's Investors Service had said in a rating review of the three OMCs late in last month. The agency had also noted that this downtrend along with increased purchase of discounted Russian oil had increased these firms' profitability.

With the woes at U.S. and European banks stoking fears of a contagion effect and a demand slump, oil prices have plummeted below $75 a barrel, lifting the marketing margin for Indian OMCs to ₹11.1/litre and ₹8.7/litre , JM Financial said in a research note.

If crude prices sustain below $75-80 a barrel and "the government permits OMCs to recoup past losses" by not paring retail prices, "this should help them to partly recoup the huge net loss (of ₹50,000 crore) they incurred in the first nine months of 2022-23", JM Financial analyst Dayanand Mittal said.

This January, the Centre had approved ₹22,000 crore as compensation to OMCs for losses suffered due to domestic LPG sales.

Japan PM Kishida to visit India today; G-7, G-20, Indo-Pacific ties on agenda

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Synchronising plans for the G-7 summit in Hiroshima in May and the G-20 summit in Delhi in September will be on the agenda for Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's 24-hour visit to Delhi on Monday, a senior Japanese official said.

Mr. Kishida will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and also deliver a major speech on Japan's Indo-Pacific strategy and its new defence posture, more than 15 years since the late Shinzo Abe first spoke about Indo-Pacific cooperation during a visit to Delhi. Mr. Kishida and Mr. Modi will also take a walk together at a park in Delhi to visit a venerated tree with deep roots to Gautam Buddha's time.

Mr. Kishida has been on a whirlwind spree of meetings with international leaders beginning in January, when he travelled to the U.S., Canada, the U.K., France and Italy, and also hosted German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Tokyo this weekend to discuss the G-7 agenda with member countries. He will make the short trip to Delhi to work with Mr. Modi on more cooperation between G-7 and G-20 Presidencies, and is likely to make another attempt at bringing India on board with more tough language on Russia during the Hiroshima G-7 meeting, something India didn't sign on to during last year's G-7 summit in Germany.

Fumio Kishida

"As Japan and India assume the Presidencies of the G-7 and the G-20 respectively this year, Prime Minister Kishida looks forward to engaging in candid discussions with Mr. Modi on the roles that the G-7 and the G-20 should play in overcoming such global challenges as regional and international security, food security, climate and energy, fair and transparent development finance," Noriyuki Shikata, Cabinet Secretary for Public Affairs at the Japanese Prime Minister's Office, told *The Hindu* when asked about the visit.

Mr. Kishida's visit is unusual, as it is not a part of the annual bilateral summits Indian and Japanese leaders have held since 2006. Government sources also said that the visit would focus on "converging priorities on critical global issues, including food and health security, energy transitions and economic security," indicating discussions on the impact of the Ukraine war and the COVID-19 pandemic were on the agenda for talks.

Bilateral issues

Mr. Kishida will meet Mr. Modi after laying a wreath at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Rajghat. The two leaders are expected to announce a detailed commitment on coordination between the G-7 and G-20 summits this year. In particular, Mr. Kishida will speak about increasing engagement between the G-7 and the Global South, much like the Indian Presidency of the G-20 has done. In addition, they will discuss bilateral issues, including Japan's targeted 5-trillion yen public and private investment in India, connectivity projects in the northeast, and the much-delayed Shinkansen high-speed rail project.

Sources said the two sides would also outlook India-Japan cooperation under their "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" over the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP), which will be outlined by Mr. Kishida during his "Sapru House lecture" later in the day. "[PM Kishida] thinks that it was in India where the vision of FOIP was born," Mr. Shikata said, referencing Abe's "Confluence of the Seas" speech to the Indian Parliament in 2007. "He looks forward to discussing the future of the 'Indo-Pacific' with the people of India on this occasion of his visit to India," Mr. Shikata added.

Mr. Kishida will also visit Buddha Jayanti Park and see the Bal Bodhi Tree, which is believed to be connected to the "Mahabodhi tree" that Gautam Buddha attained enlightenment under. The tree grew from a sapling presented by former Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and was planted by former PM Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964.

Khalistani protesters take down Tricolour, try to storm High Commission in London

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lodging a strong protest against the vandalisation of the National Flag outside the Indian High Commission in London by Khalistani protesters, and "indifference" of the British government, the External Affairs Ministry on Sunday night summoned British Deputy High Commissioner Christina Scott.

Ms. Scott was asked for an explanation and full inquiry, the Ministry said in a statement, adding that the British government's attitude to the security of Indian diplomats was "unacceptable".

The protesters, who were demonstrating against a crackdown by security forces in Punjab on the *Waaris Punjab De*, shouted pro-Khalistani slogans, and attempted to enter the High Commission, while a protester climbed up to the balcony and brought down the Tricolour. A video shared by a High Commission official shows a member of the High Commission staff securing the Tricolour and handing it to someone inside the building.

"An explanation was demanded for the complete absence of the British security that allowed these elements to enter the High Commission premises. She was reminded of the basic obligations of the U.K. government under the Vienna Convention," the Ministry said.

"India finds unacceptable the indifference of the U.K. Government to the security of Indian diplomatic premises and personnel in the U.K.," it added.

"I condemn the disgraceful acts against the people and premises of the Indian High Commission in London – totally unacceptable," British High Commissioner Alex Ellis said in a tweet.

The Ministry said India expected the U.K. government to take immediate steps to "identify, arrest and prosecute" all those involved in the incident.

No antibiotics, plasma therapy to treat adult COVID patients: govt.

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The COVID-19 National Task Force of the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry on Sunday issued revised clinical guidelines for the management of adult COVID-19 patients.

New guidelines

As per the new guidelines, convalescent plasma therapy and drugs, including lopinavir-ritonavir, molnupiravir, favipiravir, azithromycin and doxycycline, are not to be used for treatment. "Antibiotics should not be used unless there is clinical suspicion of bacterial infection. The possibility of co-infection of COVID-19 with other endemic infections must be considered. Systemic corticosteroids are not indicated in mild disease," the guidelines said.

'Public mood indicates Congress will return to power in Rajasthan'

Upbeat over the party's chances in the next Assembly election, Chief Minister says there is no anti-incumbency atmosphere in the State and the welfare schemes launched by the government such as health insurance of ₹25 lakh for every household and LPG cylinders for ₹500 are game changers. He urges the PM to bring in a right to social security law, and asserts that there is no divide in the party

INTERVIEW

Ashok Gehlot

Varghese K. George
Sandeep Phukan

Unhindered by the leadership tussle and factionalism in his party, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot maintains that the Congress will come back to power on the popularity of his government's welfare schemes. Excerpts:

Rajasthan has a tradition of voting out a government every five years, but you have been saying that you are confident of coming back to power. What is the basis of your confidence?

One gets to sense the mood of the public. I have given five Budgets and each one had a new element in it and even the Opposition didn't have anything to say. There is no *mahaul* [atmosphere] of anti-incumbency and it is *mahaul* that makes you win or lose an election.

In Kerala, even before the election, the mood was that the [Left Front] government will repeat and that happened. We have seen the mood of the public during Rahul Gandhi*ji*'s Bharat Jodo Yatra in Rajasthan.

The welfare schemes that we have launched, be it offering LPG cooking gas cylinders for ₹500, health insurance of ₹25 lakh for every household or making 100 units of electricity absolutely free, these schemes themselves are game changers. We are offering a minimum monthly income of ₹1,000 to almost one crore people in the form of old-age pension, widow pension, disability pension, income for single women and so on. In Rajasthan, 1.35 crore people are covered for ₹25 lakh under the Chiranjeevi Health Scheme whereas the Ayushman Bharat Scheme has a cap of ₹5 lakh as well as on the number of beneficiaries. No other State has a universal scheme like ours. The prevalent theme in our latest Budget is *bachat, rahat, badhat* [savings, relief and growth].

Do you think these sops alone can win you elections?

These schemes are part of good governance, but our focus is also on implementation. We want Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi*ji* to now enact a right to social security law on the lines of the National Food Security Act and the Right to Education Act that were passed

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh and Sonia Gandhi*ji*. Rajasthan government has gone back to old pension scheme (OPS), which is also a security for government employees.

A lot of economists have written against our government, but my argument is that if we have financially managed OPS for 65 years, why can't we do it now. Even the Delhi High Court has said how can the government discriminate between OPS and new pension system (NPS). High Court judges are entitled to OPS, while the lower court judges are covered by NPS. The paramilitary forces like BSF and ITBP also get NPS. Such discrimination creates a sense of insecurity among employees.

My emphasis is on a national law on social security that will also ensure uniformity of different kinds of pensions. Right now, different State governments give different amounts.

The BJP has criticised your government on a range of issues: from insulting the widows of Pulwama martyrs to the communal killing of Kanhaiya Lal in Udaipur. How worried are you about a possible polarising narrative against your government?

I think our government's goodwill is at the highest level and these attempts by the Opposition may only have some temporary effect.

As far as the widows of the Pulwama martyrs are concerned, we have given them a package as per government rules. Let me tell you, during the Kargil War, my previous government had come up with a package that guaranteed ₹25-lakh compensation, land along the Indira Gandhi canal, a house of the Rajasthan Housing Board and a government job that was reserved for the unborn child of a pregnant wife of a martyr. No one can lecture me on honouring our bravehearts.

About the Udaipur incident, yes the issue could have flared up across the country, but I had visited the family soon after the incident with the Chief Secretary and Director-General of Police to instil confidence among the family members. And we arrested the culprits in no time. There are always people who try to mislead but people see through the truth.

The Congress's biggest problem in Rajasthan though is internal. The leadership tussle between you and Sachin Pilot is yet to be resolved and the Congress seems a divided house before the Assembly election.

There is no divide in the Congress. We will contest the elections together and come back to power. It is a tradition in the Congress that we fight elections unitedly and then later the party high command decides who will be the Chief Minister. When we are in the same party, we must fight the elections collectively as one cannot win an election alone.

There has been a perceptible change in your social media profile, with a clear focus on reaching out to the youth.

The idea is to take our welfare schemes to the public and make them understand.

We had not invested much in publicity the way Modi*ji* or the Aam Admi Party have been marketing themselves. We are making a conscious effort now.

BJP MPs spar with Rahul during House panel meet on G-20

Presentation at meet emphasised India's role as "mother democracy", which prompted a debate

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee chaired by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Saturday rapidly degenerated into a war of words between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and BJP members over the former's comments on the "state of Indian democracy".

Mr. Jaishankar made a detailed presentation on the preparations for the G-20 summit and the presummit events. The presentation emphasised India's role as "mother democracy", which reportedly prompted a debate on the democratic credentials of the country.

The BJP's Rajya Sabha member G.V.L. Narasimha Rao, according to sources, flagged the recent report by financial research group Hindenburg and "anti-India" comments made by billionaire philanthropist George Soros, both of which, he said, were part of a larger "anti-India" conspiracy. The party's Lok Sabha member Anil Firojiya, without naming Mr. Gandhi, said there were political leaders who tried to score brownie points by talking about Indian democracy on a foreign land.

Mr. Gandhi, according to sources, opened his remarks by reiterating that democracy was under attack in the country, to which Mr. Jaishankar retorted saying "most of us disagree with you".

Mr. Gandhi responded by saying "it is fine" and that it was Mr. Jaishankhar's "democratic right" to think so, just as it is "my democratic right to reply when attacked".

He clarified that his remarks were aimed at an individual who was named in the Hindenburg report and not against the government and that an individual industrialist does not stand for the government or the country. BJP members repeatedly interjected as Mr. Gandhi spoke, leading to a shouting match between the two sides.

As tempers rose, Mr. Jaishankar interceded to say that the meet was not the right platform for such an exchange. "It is baffling that there is no scope of a peaceful dialogue left at any platform. Never before have we seen Consultative Committees whittle down to partisan shouting matches," a member told *The Hindu*.

Delhi Police visit Rahul's house, serve fresh notice over his yatra remarks

Notice issued over 'women being sexually assaulted' comment during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Srinagar; Congress leader sends preliminary reply seeking time, while party alleges 'intimidation'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Sunday served a fresh notice on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at his residence, over his remarks during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir that "women are still being sexually assaulted".

Special Commissioner of Police (CP), Sagar Preet Hooda, who led a team of officers to Mr. Gandhi's residence in New Delhi, said they sought information about the "victims" he referred to in his remarks. The police team arrived at Mr. Gandhi's residence around 10 a.m., but could meet him only after two hours. "We met Mr. Gandhi at his residence and spoke to him briefly about his remarks. He said he would provide us with the information once he has compiled it since it was a long yatra and he had met several people," Mr. Hooda said.

The Hindu has learnt that Mr. Gandhi, after consulting his lawyers shortly after the visit, sent a four-page preliminary response to the police, seeking time of eight to 10 days to share the information and also questioning the urgency on the matter after 45 days.

Congress supporters being detained during a protest, after police personnel called on Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Sending the reply a little before 4 p.m., Mr. Gandhi termed the police action "unprecedented", and asked whether this had anything to do with his position taken on the Adani issue, sources said.

Congress leader and senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who was present at Mr. Gandhi's residence during the police visit, is learnt to have advised the former Congress president on his response.

The matter pertains to Mr. Gandhi's statements towards the end of his yatra in Srinagar on January 30 where he said that he had met a number of people who told him that "women are still being sexually assaulted".

According to Mr. Hooda, since the yatra passed through Delhi and Mr. Gandhi lives here, the police are conducting an inquiry if the Congress leader met any such persons in the city. He said this was the third time a police team had visited Mr. Gandhi's residence on the matter. The police had served him a notice on March 16.

Several Congress leaders slammed the government for "misusing the security agencies to intimidate and harass Opposition leaders". Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said that Mr. Gandhi was being "questioned by the police to divert public attention from the Adani issue and to save the industrialist".

The Congress said in a tweet, "[The] Bharat Jodo Yatra and Rahul Gandhi*ji* gave women a safe platform to share their problems and pains. This shameful act of Delhi Police proves that PM Modi is nervous about our questions on Adani case."

At a joint press conference at the All India Congress Committee headquarters, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Jairam Ramesh and Mr. Singhvi said the move was "unprecedented" and "smacked of pettiness".

"If Union Ministers make similar comments in our State, should Rajasthan Police file a case against them," asked Mr. Gehlot, adding the move reminded him of the time when Indira Gandhi was targeted by the Janata government, and "the people gave a strong reply".

Rahul's YouTube videos on Adani are 'suppressed': Cong.

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi's videos on industrialist Gautam Adani have fewer views despite similar user engagement as other videos, the Congress has said in a letter to YouTube. The party has further alleged that the browse feature for these specific videos seem to have been "algorithmically suppressed".

Sam Pitroda, chairperson of the Indian Overseas Congress, has flagged the issue in a letter to YouTube CEO Neal Mohan. Mr. Gandhi's team, Mr. Pitroda wrote in the letter, found it a "bit bizarre and is searching for an explanation".

"They have used YouTube's own data and analytics to show that viewership of videos of Mr. Adani are being suppressed, perhaps unwittingly and algorithmically," he added.

To support its claim, the Congress submitted a presentation analysing the viewership data of the video series on Mr. Adani, called '*Mitr Kaal*', versus his video from the Bharat Jodo Yatra. The positive interactions of the yatra video at 83,602 is fewer than that of the '*Mitr Kaal*' episode one at 99,197 and yet, the party pointed out that while the yatra video got over 20 lakh views, the '*Mitr Kaal*' video got only 4.78 lakh views.

Most people see videos through the 'YouTube Browse' feature, where the home page throws in recommendations. In the case of Mr. Gandhi's channel, the party claimed this feature has been down since February 9.

Data compiled by independent social media analytics firm Social Blade confirmed this trend in declining views of Mr. Gandhi videos. According to the firm, the monthly views for Mr. Gandhi's videos increased from 4.6 lakh in September 2022 to over 33 million in January 2023. However, video views in the past 30 days decreased by over 59%.

(With inputs from Aroon Deep)

KANNUR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT LIMITED
Tenders are invited by Managing Director, KIAL for the following work :

Sl. No	Tender ID/EoI No.	Brief Description	Last Date of Submission
1.	2023_ KIAL_567185_1	NIT for Operating & Managing Car Parking Facility, Toll booth, Baggage Wrapping, Paid Porter and Meet & Greet Services at Kannur International Airport. For full details, please visit http://etenders.kerala.gov.in.	12.04.2023
2.	KIAL/COO/35/2023	Expression of Interest (EoI) for Developing, Operating & Managing commercial units within the available structure at Kannur Airport. For full details, please visit www.kannurairport.aero	12.04.2023

Sd/- Managing Director

With family ID, U.P. hopes to plug gaps in delivery of schemes

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

The BJP government in Uttar Pradesh has launched a project to boost last-mile delivery of welfare schemes in the State.

In late January, the State government launched a 12-digit family identification number scheme.

Data from 17 government departments are being collated under the scheme, tallying them with ration and Aadhaar card information to arrive at a family identification number.

Currently, data for 3.6 crore families are already available in the State, with the ration card number being the family ID number. For those without ration cards, an enrolment process is under way.

Same criteria

"We basically found from data from different departments that in one family, one person was receiving old age pension, but had no ration card or the family had no ration card, whereas the criteria for receiving pension and the ration card are the same. For example, the Social Welfare Department showed 5.6 lakh beneficiaries of old age pension, but [they] have no ration card. So now we are on to groundwork, and getting ration cards made for beneficiaries who don't have the cards," said Asim Arun, Minister for Social Welfare.

The scheme is similar to the *Kutumba* project in Karnataka, which aims to provide a unique identity to resident families and serves as a repository of the resident attributes, allowing them to avail seamless services and benefits from the government,

"It's been barely two months since the project is on. We are hoping to provide family IDs to all beneficiary families and plug any leaks in terms of delivery [of schemes]," Mr. Arun said.

Include ST women in Hindu Succession Act, DMK MP urges Centre

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) MP P. Wilson has written to the Union government, seeking that a notification be issued to ensure that women from the Scheduled Tribes are included when applying provisions of the Hindu Succession Amendment Act, 2005, which gives daughters equal right to the inheritance of their father or the Hindu Undivided Family (HUF).

He said that Section 2(2) of the Act excludes women of Scheduled Tribes, which had created a "wholly unjust situation wherein the female members of the Scheduled Tribes alone are not legally entitled to an equal share in their father's/HUF's properties".

In a letter to Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda and Social Justice Minister Virendra Kumar on March 16, he said that the law had now evolved to an extent where any discrimination based on gender cannot be sustained as it is the anti-thesis of Article 14 of the Constitution.

He cited recent orders of the Supreme Court and the Madras High Court.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only through e-procurement portal)

BWSSB invites tenders in Two cover system from eligible tenderers & reputed Manufacturers/ Authorised Dealer for the following works.

Name of the Work	Amount put to tender / EMD
Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & Quality Assurance), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G.Road, Bangalore- 560 009.	
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE(D)/TA(D&QA)AE/2300/2022-23 Date: 16.03.2023	
Work of Construction of 12 Houses Block -IV Quarters Building with stilt+Ground Floor+First Floor+Second Floor at CJF Premises, 18th Cross, Malleswaram, Bangaluru.	Rs. 391.95 Lakhs / Rs. 6.95 Lakhs
Last date and time for receipt of tenders will be on: **19.04.2023 upto 16:00 Hrs.** The Technical bids will be opened on: **21.04.2023 at 12:00 Noon.**	**Sd/- Chief Engineer (Design & QA).**
Office of the Chief Engineer (Project), 3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G.Road, Bangalore - 560 009.	
IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(P)/ACE(Cstr&DCW)/TA-2/1602/2022-23 Date: 18.03.2023	
Supply of 100mm dia Class K9 DI Pipes confirming to IS:8329/2000 with inner Cement Mortar Lining and outer Zinc Coating & necessary Bituminous suitable for standard lengths with SBR/EPDM Rubber Gaskets confirming to IS:5382/1985 and its dimension in accordance with IS:12820/1989.(Call-3)	Rs. 4,82,01,230/- / Rs. 7.23 Lakhs
Last date and time for receipt of tenders will be on: **05.04.2023 before 16:00 Hrs.** The Technical bids will be opened on: **06.04.2023 at 17:00Hrs.**	**Sd/- Chief Engineer (Project).**

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement can be obtained by logging on to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the above office during working hours.
DIPR/CP/RA/5362/2022-23

A BG-BGE

INBRIEF

One more arrested in PFI Phulwari Sharif case, says NIA

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Sunday said it had arrested one more Popular Front of India (PFI) operative in Bihar, as part of its ongoing investigation into activities of the banned outfit. Mohd Irshad Alam of Mehsi, East Champaran, was arrested in the Phulwari Sharif-Bihar PFI case, an NIA spokesperson said. The development comes close on the heels of unearthing a hawala network in South India. The NIA spokesperson said Alam was arrested with the support of the Bihar Police in the PFI case, which was registered in July last year following the arrest of four people. PTI

Amritpal Singh 'illegally detained', petition alleges

The legal advisor to Waris Punjab De (WPD) and its fugitive chief Amritpal Singh, on Sunday, filed a writ petition before the Punjab and Haryana High Court alleging that he had been illegally detained by the police and paramilitary forces and sought his release. In the petition, it was alleged that Mr. Singh was detained illegally from Shahkot in Jalandhar on Saturday, without disclosing any reason and that the authorities were intentionally not disclosing anything to his family despite the fact that over 24 hours had passed since his detention. However, in a statement released on Sunday, the police said they were yet to track down Mr. Singh.

Visva-Bharati University issues notice to Amartya Sen

Visva-Bharati University has issued a notice to Nobel laureate Amartya Sen asking him to show-cause why an eviction order will not be issued against him for not vacating a 13 decimal plot he is occupying illegally. The noted economist was asked to reply to the notice by March 24 and appear before Ashok Mahato, Joint Registrar and Estate Officer of the university, personally or through a representative by March 29, along with evidence in support of assertion that he is not occupying the plot unauthorisedly. "In case you and your authorised representative fail to appear on the said date, the case may be decided ex-parte," the notice said. PTI

Emaar first overseas company to start project in Kashmir

The Dubai-based Emaar has become the first overseas company to invest in a mega-mall spread over 10 lakh square feet in Srinagar, a first since the Centre ended Jammu and Kashmir's special constitutional position under Article 370 in 2019. Describing the project as "a new dawn of limitless possibilities", J&K Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha participated in a *Bhoomi Pujan* in the Sempora area of Srinagar on Sunday as part of the ceremony of laying the foundation stone. "We are taking forward the Prime Minister's vision for the development of J&K. Mall of Srinagar will have a transformative impact, and will boost the infrastructure and ease of living," Mr. Sinha said.

'Vandalism on places of worship is unacceptable'

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese messaged his strong response to it, but it is hard to deal with graffiti with outrageous statements, says Australia's High Commissioner; the two nations are close friends and the relationship is good enough and difficult issues can be raised privately and publicly

INTERVIEW

Barry O' Farrell

Suhasini Haidar

Australia believes the vandalism and attacks on temples in Australia are unacceptable, and the police force is "vigilant", says Australia's High Commissioner to India Barry O'Farrell, but there are limited options in dealing with them. On the outcomes of last week's visit to India by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, the envoy said leaders of both countries have developed friendship and are committed to completing the Free Trade Agreement this year.

What were the outcomes of Prime Minister Albanese's visit? I ask because beyond the bonhomie on the cricket field and public statements, there were just four MoUs on issues such as solar technology and innovation, sports and audio visual cooperation.

I think, first and foremost, you should never overlook the fact that in democracies, personal relationships matter. And the fact that over two days, our two Prime Ministers had five one-on-one meetings, I think, reflects not just the strength of the partnership, but also a friendship. Prime Minister Albanese's objectives when he came was to further strengthen and deepen the relationship, particularly in areas of trade and economic, climate and renewable defence and security.

This visit also followed a Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting. How significant was the reference to Ukraine?

I think it is [significant]. As we keep saying, the Quad

is a positive and practical forum, and a year on from that Quad meeting in Australia, we have seen other impacts of the war. We have witnessed too often the destruction of lives and buildings in Ukraine itself. But we also know that the conflict is having an impact on people worldwide and their economic situation, what it's doing to food security, and prices. And so whether it's Quad leaders meeting or the G20, I think that there are issues that cannot be ignored. Quad is not a military construct; the Quad doesn't talk about military issues. But the Quad is strategic, the Quad wants to deliver an Indo Pacific that is sovereign, that is respectful of rules, that is peaceful, and that is stable. And the Quad is trying to do that on some of those practical issues that countries who live in the most strategically challenged part of the world, with the exception of one part of northern Europe, at the present time, are facing every day.

Was Prime Minister Albanese surprised when Prime Minister Narendra Modi raised the issue of attacks against temples in Australia? And is the Australian government able to control them, as another such case occurred in Brisbane last week?

We are close enough friends and the relationship is good enough so difficult issues can be raised both privately and publicly, and reacted to publicly. Vandalism attacks on any places of worship, be they temples, mosques, synagogues, churches, or other religions, is simply unacceptable, and Prime Minister Albanese messaged his strong response to it.

How easy is it to stop these things? Well, certainly our police and security agencies are intending to be incredibly vigilant. But it is hard to deal with vandalism, graffiti with outrageous statements, other than painting over them.

What is the Australian assessment of the threat of Khalistani groups?

I hadn't heard of the Khalistan movement until I came to India three years ago. As the diaspora has grown, so too have some people been involved with the Khalistani movement. These so called referenda not only has no legal standing in Australia, it has no legal standing here.

The big photo

opportunity of the Albanese visit was from the two Prime Ministers taking a victory lap on a sort of cricket chariot in the Ahmedabad stadium. How do you respond to criticism that they politicised the game?

Well, politics and sport have been part and parcel of Australia since the games began, in a sense, so I don't think it's a real issue. It was special, I think, for both Prime Ministers of India and Australia to be standing on a hallowed sports field alongside the national players, as the national anthems were played, and mark the 75th anniversary of the 1947-48 cricket tour by the Indian team led by Lala Amarnath in Australia.

I can tell you that not only my personal view, but the view of many spectators was that the Australia-India tests these days are better sport than the Ashes [Australia-U.K.].

Background radiation higher in Kerala, but no risk: study

Higher radiation levels in Kollam are attributed to monazite sands that are high in thorium; study found that average natural background levels of gamma radiation in India was 94 nGy per hr

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

In parts of Kerala, background radiation levels, or that emitted from natural sources such as rocks, sand or mountains, are nearly three times more than what's been assumed, a pan-India study by scientists at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has found. This does not, however, translate to an elevated health risk.

Rare minerals: A sand-mining area at Vellanathu Thuruth in the Kollam region. C. SURESH KUMAR

Radiation results from the disintegrating nucleus of an unstable element and these can be from anywhere, including from inside our bodies to the constituents of matter.

Gamma rays are a kind of radiation that can pass unobstructed through matter. Though extremely energetic, they are harmless unless present in large concentrated doses. It's similar to heat from a fire feeling pleasant until a sustained, concentrated burst can scald or worse, ignite.

Especially around nuclear plants, gamma radiation levels are monitored as also the average quantity of radiation that plant workers are exposed to.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) specifies maximum radiation exposure levels and this has also been adopted by India's atomic energy establishment.

Public exposure should not exceed 1 milli-Sievert every year, those who work in plants or are by virtue of their occupation shouldn't be exposed to over 30 milli-Sievert every year.

The present study found that average natural background levels of gamma radiation in India was 94 nGy/hr (nano Gray per hour) (or roughly 0.8 milli sievert/year). The last such study, conducted in 1986, computed such radiation to be 89 nGy/hr. 1 Gray is equivalent to 1 Sievert, though one unit refers to radiation emitted and the other to biological exposure.

However, the 1986 study measured the highest radiation exposure at Chavara, Kerala at 3,002 nGy/year. The present study found that the levels in Kollam district (where Chavara is situated) were 9,562 nGy/hr, or about three times more. This computes to about 70 milliGray a year, or a little more than what a worker in a nuclear plant is exposed to.

"This doesn't mean that those at Kollam are being exposed to higher, dangerous levels of radiation. There have been extensive studies in the past that have checked for higher rates of cancer or mortality and nothing out of the ordinary has been found," Dinesh Aswal, senior scientist at the BARC and among the authors of the study, told *The Hindu*.

The higher radiation levels in Kollam are attributed to monazite sands that are high in thorium, and this for many years, is part of India's long-term plan to sustainably produce nuclear fuel. In southern India, because of the presence of granite and basaltic, volcanic rock has higher levels of radiation from uranium deposits.

Difficult to allocate public fund to art and culture: govt.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Officials say culture should be an area where expenditure be sourced from non-government sources

Given the high disparity it experiences in elementary rural infrastructure such as health, education and transportation, it might not be "tenable" for a developing nation like India to allocate a considerable proportion of its public fund to the promotion of art and culture, the Ministry of Culture has said.

The Ministry was responding to observations made by a parliamentary committee that the allocation of the Ministry of Culture was just 0.075% of the total Budget this year, which was in sharp contrast to countries such as China, the U.K., U.S., and Australia, which spend roughly 2%-5% of their Budget on promotion of art and culture.

Officials who appeared before the committee said a majority of the amount spent on art and culture in the countries mentioned above are sourced from non-government sources, which is not the case in India.

The Ministry was also trying and evolving innovative methods to maximise the participation of non-government organisations in the field of promotion and conservation of art and culture.

"Culture should be an area where a large part of expenditure needs to be sourced from non-government sources" and hence the Ministry was also supporting non-governmental and voluntary organisations through its various schemes for participating in overall propagation of all forms of art and culture, the report submitted by the department-related Standing Committee on Transport Tourism and Culture quoted the Culture Ministry as saying.

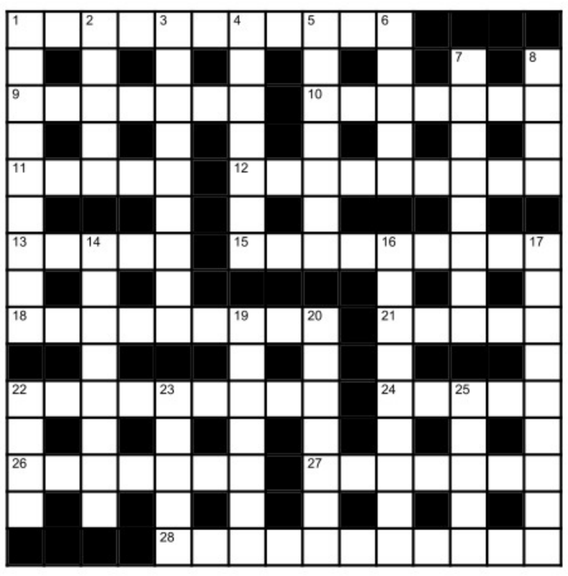
The Union Budget for 2023-24 has allocated ₹3,399.65 crore under revenue and ₹285.4 crore under capital heads to the Ministry of Culture for prioritised programmes.

TH CROSSWORD + 13817

(set by Afterdark)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Nothing, casting in play is interesting (11)
9 Son rushed back to ER with southern hunters (7)
10 Pretty timid monkey with long head trapped (7)
11 Substance is fluorine, she split up (5)
12 To break down a smallest item is enervating primarily (9)
13 Good and gifted actor (5)
15 Inflammation? Come in, after one take first tablet and a second later (9)
18 Coaches without current delayed? Explain (9)
21 Trouser generally contains twilled fabric (5)
22 Flash singers apart from Henry, worried after catching cold (9)
24 Leading stuntman replaces female in fight scene (5)
26 Expression of defiance for drunkard at this place (2,5)
27 Prevailing trend is a song about escape (1,2,4)
28 Building sets, second without third quarter and rent for auditions (6,5)

Down

1 Search results in return gift inside, time for a scrap (9)
2 Post opinion after first screening (5)
3 Fresh cheese, it's common in Antarctica (3,6)
4 Lower idiot's years to avoid abuse essentially (7)
5 Second at home, laurel say on tabletop (7)
6 Sources from government; use ammonium sulphate, NPK, organic fertilizer (5)
7 Wild tigers primarily enumerated by top rangers in journal (8)
8 Data unit near outskirts of Thane (4)
14 Worked on bail right? Reportedly so for a socialist perhaps (8)
16 Again second? Not new being defiant (9)
17 Plant is beautiful, peasant killed insect (9)
19 A friend at Ulsoor, heartless and non-professional (7)
20 One third of side sacked, worried on advance (7)
22 Growth is pacy, strong, collected (4)
23 Say instructions for glasses (5)
25 Large total (5)

SUDOKU

5					1	6		9
				2	9			
2			6			1		5
	2					8	3	
				8				
	8	1					5	
9		7			5			4
			7	4				
8		2	9					6

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

No.SS5743 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	3	1	9	5	6	2	7	8
2	8	5	3	7	4	6	9	1
6	9	7	8	1	2	5	3	4
9	2	6	4	8	7	3	1	5
3	7	4	1	2	5	9	8	6
5	1	8	6	3	9	7	4	2
8	5	3	7	6	1	4	2	9
1	4	2	5	9	3	8	6	7
7	6	9	2	4	8	1	5	3

FAITH

Five causes for all actions

Five causes are said to be responsible for the accomplishment of all actions. Firstly, the human body – the conglomerate of great elements known as 'Adhishtanam'. Secondly, the jiva or soul residing in the physical body – the doer of activities. Thirdly, the motor organs instrumental for activities. Fourthly, various processes like breath. And lastly, the help of Divinity. The Bhagavad Gita in Chapter 18, Sloka 14 says: 'Daivam chaivatra panchamam' – the fifth factor is the supreme self – the inner ruler that is the main cause in completing action.

Sri Vedanta Desika in his work Rahasyatraya Saram says that God props us up in five ways. Firstly, He makes us do things and so is called Karayitha. Secondly, we, the doers, are called Kartha. Some times, in certain cases, He acts both as Kartha and Karayitha – in acts like granting boons, creation, protection and destruction. Thirdly, if He does not prevent us in our activities (be it good or bad), He is called as Upekshakan. Fourthly, if He admits and authorises our doings, He is called Anumantha. And lastly, He extends His help to us and hence is called Sahakari. If the thinking of a man is free from ego, that is, he is the doer of actions, then no sin will accrue to him. Otherwise, he is only labouring hard under a perverse understanding, Sri Valayepettai Ramachariar said in a discourse.

With the senses, body and other faculties granted by the Supreme Being, an individual, of his own free will directing the senses, performing actions, and is responsible for the activity. If he does good things, he becomes elated with divine bliss, or else will have to face the eventualities known as the effects of karma.

DHAKA

Bus falls into ditch in Bangladesh killing 19 people and injuring 30

AFP

At least 19 people were killed and 30 injured on Sunday when a bus crashed into a ditch in Bangladesh. The Dhaka-bound bus veered out of control on the Bangabandhu Expressway at 7,45 a.m. in Madaripur's Shibchar. A local journalist said the the bus dropped some 30 feet into the ditch. PTI

QUITO

6.8 magnitude earthquake in Ecuador and Peru kills 15 people

AP

A strong earthquake shook southern Ecuador and northern Peru on Saturday, killing at least 15 persons, trapping others under rubble, and sending rescue teams out into streets littered with debris. The 6.8-strong quake was centred just off the Pacific Coast, about 80 km south of Guayaquil, Ecuador's second-largest city. AP

DUBAI

Assad in UAE as second post-quake Gulf visit signals growing Arab ties

REUTERS

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad met with UAE leaders in Abu Dhabi, his second Gulf visit since last month's earthquake in his country prompted renewed efforts to bring Damascus back into the Arab fold. The trip comes after a visit to Oman last month, his only engagements in Arab countries since the start of the 2011 war. AFP

OHRID

Kosovo and Serbia fail to sign agreement after marathon talks

AFP

Kosovo and Serbia stopped short of signing a potentially landmark deal late on Saturday night after holding a marathon round of talks. Leaders of both countries had negotiations for nearly 12 hours during a summit in North Macedonia, picking over an 11-point plan unveiled by the EU last month during a Brussels summit. AFP

Putin visits Mariupol in first trip to occupied territory

Russian President's visit comes ahead of Xi Jinping's trip to Moscow this week; Kremlin calls Putin's Mariupol visit spontaneous; Kyiv says action shows a lack of remorse from Russian leader

Agence France-Presse
KYIV

Russian President Vladimir Putin made a surprise trip to Mariupol, the Kremlin said on Sunday, his first visit to territory captured from Ukraine since the start of Moscow's invasion.

Just hours after Mr. Putin visited Crimea to mark the ninth anniversary of the peninsula's annexation, a video distributed by the Kremlin showed him landing by helicopter in Mariupol, the port city that Moscow captured after a long siege last spring.

The visit triggered an angry reaction from Ukraine, with a presidential aide blasting its "cynicism" and "lack of remorse".

Musical theatre visit

The Russian leader took a tour of the city and was seen driving a car. The Kremlin said he visited a rebuilt musical theatre and followed the presentation of a report on reconstruction work.

"We're praying for you," a resident told Mr. Putin, referring to the city as "a little piece of paradise", according to images broadcast by Russian state TV, showing the visit took place at night.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters the visit was "spontaneous", adding that Mr. Putin's movements around the city and his meeting with locals were not planned.

New subjects: Vladimir Putin waves to people during his visit to Mariupol in the Russian-controlled Donetsk region on Sunday. AP

He added that the visit took place "very late" on Saturday and in the early hours of Sunday.

It was Mr. Putin's first trip to the eastern Donbas region since he launched the invasion in February 2022, and comes almost a year after Moscow announced the capture of Mariupol after a campaign that saw the destruction of the Azovstal steel works, the last holdout of Ukrainian forces in the strategic port city.

Mariupol was left devastated after Moscow relentlessly bombarded the city on the shores of the Sea of Azov and subjected it to a brutal siege.

'Akin to thief's visit'

"The criminal always returns to the crime scene... the murderer of thousands of Mariupol families came to admire the ruins of the city and (its) graves. Cynicism and lack of remorse," Ukrainian presidential aide Mykhaylo Podolyak said on Twitter.

Ukraine's Defence Ministry said on Twitter Mr. Putin visited the city at night "as befits a thief".

"He watched the 'rebuilding of the city'... at night. Probably in order not to see the city, killed by his 'liberation', in the light of day," the exiled Mariupol city council said on its Telegram account. The visit comes ahead of a trip to Moscow this week by Chinese President Xi Jinping, widely seen as a diplomatic coup for Mr. Putin.

Ties with Beijing

Beijing, a strategic ally of Moscow, has touted the trip as a "visit for peace" as it seeks to play mediator in the Ukraine conflict.

China has sought to position itself as a neutral party, urging Moscow and Kyiv to open negotiations. But Western leaders have repeatedly criticised Beijing for failing to condemn Russia's offensive, accusing it of providing Moscow with diplomatic cover for its campaign.

Mr. Putin also met Army chiefs, including the Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov, in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don near the border with Ukraine, the Kremlin said.

The Russian President also made a surprise visit to Crimea on Saturday, with Russian state TV showing him visiting the Black Sea port city of Sevastopol accompanied by the local Moscow-appointed governor Mikhail Razvozhayev.

Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 following a referendum that was not recognised by Kyiv and the international community.

Pakistan police register terror charges against Imran Khan and PTI leaders

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

The Pakistani police on Sunday registered a terrorism case against Imran Khan and over a dozen Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders for indulging in vandalism, attacking security personnel and creating unrest outside the judicial complex here ahead of a court hearing in a graft case involving the ousted premier.

Clashes erupted outside the Islamabad Judicial Complex on Saturday when Mr. Khan arrived in Islamabad from Lahore to attend a much-awaited hearing in the Toshakhana case.

During the confrontation between PTI workers and police, over 25 security personnel were injured, prompting Additional District and Sessions Judge Zafar Iqbal to defer the court hearing till March 30.

Mass appeal: Supporters of former Prime Minister Imran Khan dance outside his house in Lahore in Pakistan on Sunday. AP

17 leaders named in FIR

The case was registered against arrested PTI workers and wanted party leaders. About 17 PTI leaders were named in the FIR lodged by the Islamabad Police, Geo News reported.

The FIR states that the workers damaged the police check post and the main gate of the judicial complex, it said.

As many as 18 people were arrested for arson, pelting stones and breaking the judicial complex's building, said the FIR.

"About two police vehicles and seven motorcycles were burned, and the official vehicle of the station house officer (SHO) was damaged," it added.

Lahore violence

Mr. Khan, 70, arrived in Islamabad from Lahore to appear before the court. He was accompanied by his supporters in a convoy.

Soon after he departed for Islamabad to attend the hearing, over 10,000 armed Punjab police personnel stormed Mr. Khan's Zaman Park residence in Lahore and arrested dozens of his party workers.

PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry said on Sunday said the party will get cases registered against police officers involved in the "illegal operations" and violence at Mr. Khan's residence.

Kuwait court nullifies 2022 vote, in favour of old House

Agence France-Presse
KUWAIT CITY

Kuwait's constitutional court on Sunday nullified last year's legislative elections and ruled in favour of reinstating the previous parliament, state media said, as a political crisis roils the oil-rich Gulf state.

The September polls – the most inclusive in a decade – had seen opposition members clinch 28 out of 50 seats, giving them a parliamentary majority.

The vote marked a victory for Opposition figures, many of whom had stayed out of elections in the past decade over what they saw as alleged meddling by the executive authorities over parliament.

The official KUNA news agency said that the court annulled the results due to discrepancies in the decree dissolving the previous parliament.

It also ruled to reinstate the parliament that was elected in 2020 but dissolved following orders by the crown prince in June, KUNA said.

Banking giant UBS will acquire smaller rival Credit Suisse

Associated Press
BERN

Banking giant UBS is buying its smaller rival Credit Suisse in an effort to avoid further market-shaking turmoil in global banking, Swiss President Alain Berset announced on Sunday night.

Swiss President Alain Berset, who did not specify a value of the deal, called the announcement "one of great breadth for the stability of international finance. An uncontrolled collapse of Credit Suisse would lead to incalculable consequences for the country and the international financial system."

Credit Suisse is designated by the Financial Stability Board, an international body that monitors the global financial system, as one of the world's globally systemic important banks. This means regulators believe its uncontrolled failure would lead to ripples throughout the financial system not unlike the collapse of Lehman Brothers 15 years ago.

Swiss President Alain Berset refrains from divulging the value of the takeover deal

Sunday's news conference follows the collapse of two large U.S. banks last week that spurred a frantic, broad response from the U.S. government to prevent any further bank panics.

The 167-year-old Credit Suisse already received a $50 billion (54 million Swiss francs) loan from the Swiss National Bank, which briefly caused a rally in the bank's stock price. Yet the move did not appear to be enough to stem an outflow of deposits, according to news reports.

Its current troubles began after Credit Suisse reported on Tuesday that managers had identified "material weaknesses" in the bank's internal controls on financial reporting as of the end of last year. That fanned fears that Credit Suisse would be the next domino to fall.

Officials from Palestine and Israel meet in Egypt for talks

Agence France-Presse
CAIRO

Israeli and Palestinian officials were holding talks in Egypt on Sunday "to restore calm" after a surge in deadly violence in the occupied West Bank, Egypt's Foreign Ministry said.

The meeting, which follows similar talks last month in Jordan where both sides pledged to prevent violence, comes amid concerns of escalation during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan starting in the coming week.

The meeting is aimed at "supporting dialogue between the Palestinian and Israeli sides to put a stop to unilateral actions and escalation and break the cycle of violence", Egypt's Foreign Ministry added.

Officials from Egypt, Jordan and the U.S. were attending the meeting in the Red Sea resort of Sharm al-Sheikh, it added.

Few details have emerged from the talks, but the efforts were already rejected by militant Palestinian factions.

ASKUS

K. Nitya Kalyani

Q I am having two vehicles and both have compulsory personal accident premiums. I also have opted for personal accident policies from the banks where I have accounts. In case of the policyholder's death by accident can all the above policies be claimed? If so, the original FIR by the police will be only one copy and with that only one policy could be claimed as the policy issuers want the original FIR. How can the other policies be claimed then? Please advise.
P.S.A.T. LAKSHMINARAYANAN

A It is now mandatory to have a personal accident (PA) cover of ₹15 lakh for owner/ driver as part of motor insurance, whether it is only a third-party liability cover or a comprehensive cover. You have such a policy under each of your two cars and in case of an accident, you can claim only under the policy attached to the car involved. This is as far as the mandatory PA cover attached to a vehicle policy is concerned. If you have a separate standalone PA policy, such as the ones you are referring to as being from the banks where you have accounts, you can claim from them in addition to the vehicle attached policy. If it is a death claim and the multiple policies (as above) you are claiming from are from the same insurance company, you will have a simple process of documentation, namely submitting the original FIR. If they are from different companies, you can get a certified copy of the FIR to submit with the claim and the company you are claiming from will guide you in this.

Q Is health insurance necessary to claim deduction for preventive health check-up paid in cash under I-T Act Section 80D?
MURUGAIAN MARIMUTHU

A Section 80D of the I-T Act, 1961 provides for tax deduction of up to ₹25,000 a year (₹50,000 for senior citizens) for premium paid for hospitalisation policies.
Such policies, apart from paying for hospitalisation costs subject to the terms of the policy, also provide for a reimbursement claim of the cost of preventive health check up after a predetermined number of claim-free policy years. Section 80D provides for tax deductions of up to ₹5,000 for preventive health check-ups even if you are not covered under health insurance. The total tax deduction available to you is still the same. That is health insurance premium and preventive health check-up costs together still make you eligible for a maximum deduction of ₹25,000 (₹50,000 for senior citizens).

Q As a senior citizen, I am still paying insurance premium around ₹45,000 since I am continuing service. I will be unable to pay the same amount after I get relieved from my private employment. Can the government give options to do the same to get private health service or do we need to go to government hospital to get treatment?
S RAJENDRAN

A The affordability of health insurance premium can be a real challenge, especially as one moves from being gainfully employed to becoming a pensioner or worse, a retiree without pension. However, the options for medical treatment without health insurance are even more discouraging if one is used to a certain standard of care. Having said that, the government mass insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat, allows you treatment at any tertiary care facility, not only government hospitals. So too many State government health insurance schemes. If it comes to treatment at government hospitals, the teaching hospitals, the ones with the medical colleges, have some of the best expertise given the sheer number of cases they have experience in. To come back to your question on options to ensure you can access private health service, you may have to allocate some of your savings for insurance premium, if not, for healthcare costs.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Choose a health cover that protects your wealth

Health insurance companies are now designing flexible modular products that allow policyholders to financially secure themselves against towering medical inflation

TAILOR-MADE PLANS

Siddharth Singhal

India is a diverse country, with different people demanding different outcomes from the same product. The insurance landscape is constantly transforming to cater to these evolving demands. The health insurance industry, which traditionally followed a standard approach to products, is also reinventing itself by innovating as per dynamic consumer needs. Keeping customer-centricity as the focal point, health insurance companies are now designing flexible modular products that allow policyholders to financially secure themselves against towering medical inflation.

These new-age modular health insurance plans give insurers the freedom to devise their products according to personalised needs.

This is especially valuable when policyholders may not need or want a traditional plan; rather, they want to go for customised offerings that a single plan can incorporate. The flexible approach also enables policyholders to make their premium more cost-effective.

More coverage
With rising healthcare costs, the importance of high sum insured cannot be emphasised upon enough. It is always advisable to go for a plan that at least offers ₹50 lakh to 1 crore coverage.

There are also plans that come with coverage as high as ₹5 crore and provide the policyholder with an additional 30% of the sum insured on this high coverage. This makes sure that you are always covered, no matter the medical emergency.

Cutting waiting period
This is a stellar feature for senior citizens, as waiting period often comes as a pain point when they need medical attention. For instance, the waiting period of 3-4 years in a policy can now be brought down to 1-2 years or less in certain policies. In addition, some plans also reduce the waiting period for specific illnesses like diabetes and hypertension by covering them from day one.

Cumulative bonus
This is an enhanced version of the no-claims bonus. While under NCB, one gets rewarded with a discount for not making any claims during the policy year, in cumulative bonus, a certain percentage of the sum insured gets added to your cover every year even if you make a claim. In some plans, the bonus goes as high as 50% to even 100% every year at a reasonable cost. Also, a few plans even offer 5x, 6x or up to 10x of the base sum insured. Customers can choose any option and make their coverage as high as they want.

Global coverage
There are critical illnesses that may require advanced treatment overseas. In this case, global health insurance comes to your rescue where you are not bound by geographical boundaries or expenses and opt for the best course of treatment. These plans cover both emergency treatments as well as planned hospitalisations.

OPD coverage
OPD or out-patient department expenses make up about 70% of healthcare expenses in India. Fortunately, OPD as a category has started getting more traction in India in the past few years. The insurance industry has evolved to make OPD coverage more accessible through health insurance plans. Not everyone needs only large hospitalisation bills covered. So now, one no longer needs to be hospitalised in order to make a claim. Expenses like doctor consultations, tests, etc., are also covered by your insurance plan.

Consumables cover
Consumables refer to single-use products like PPE kits, syringes, masks, gloves, needles, sanitisers etc., that saw a significant rise in usage after the pandemic. However, earlier there was no mechanism in health insurance to cover these costs. In case one lands up in prolonged hospitalisation, these items would considerably add up to the bill. Now, the plans come with a consumables cover that you can opt for and get compensated for these costs.

How to lower premium
Just as you can add features to enhance your protection shield, you can also remove features to lower your premium.

Wellness benefits
Maintaining a healthy lifestyle not only rewards your body, but also your wallet. By keeping medical issues at bay, you help keep the cumulative risks low for the insurance company and therefore, are eligible for up to 100% discount on renewal, depending on terms and conditions that vary from plan to plan.

Early bird advantage
When it comes to insurance, it is often said that the best time to buy was yesterday. However, even if you missed yesterday, there's always today. By buying at a younger age, you escape the chance of many critical illnesses and therefore, qualify for a lower premium. Also, if you renew your plan under 35, you can get a discount on premium.

Tax benefits
Policyholders can benefit from tax deductions under Section 80D of the Income Tax Act, 1961, for the premium paid towards health insurance and preventive health check-ups.

Flexibility
You have the flexibility to lower your premium in these plans through multiple ways.

You can change your room rent limit, or you can opt for deductible or voluntary co-payment. If you want to escape the hassle of renewing every year, you could just opt for a multi-year policy and save up on premium by locking your rate today.

(The writer is Business Head, Health Insurance, Policybazaar.com)

Easy-to-apply decisions to self-manage investments

THINKINVESTOR

The SIP amount should be debited on the day your monthly income is credited into your bank account. This follows a principle that you invest first and spend the rest

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Are you overwhelmed by the decisions you are required to take to self-manage your goal-based investments? In this article, we shall discuss how you can use simple products such as exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and bank deposits to invest for your life goals.

A goal-based portfolio ought to have equity and bond investments. Your exposure to equity investments should preferably be in an ETF on a broad-market index (NSE 500 Index, for instance) for two reasons. One, it is easier to choose a passive fund than an active fund and ETFs have lower fees than index funds. And two, a broad-market index gives you exposure to nearly the entire equity market (NSE 500 Index covers about 96% of the market).

If you cannot find a suitable ETF tracking a broad-market index, your next preference should be an ETF tracking a large-cap index – the NSE 50 Index, for instance. You should follow two rules to set up a systematic investment plan (SIP) on the ETF. One, the tenure of the SIP should match the time horizon for your life goal. And two, the SIP amount should be debited on the day your monthly income is credited into your bank account. This follows a principle that you invest first and spend the rest. Your bond investments should be in a recurring deposit with the tenor of the deposit matching the time horizon for the life goal.

The above principle requires you to take only two investment decisions for each life goal. One, you must choose an ETF that trades actively on the chosen index (broad-market or large-cap). And two, you must weigh the attractiveness of the interest rate on the recurring deposit against the fear about the safety of your investment. Small wonder that most individuals prefer large banks.

The only continual decision you are required to make is to manage your ETF investments through the time horizon for a life goal. Suppose you expect 12% annual return on your equity investment.

Every year, if your equity investment returns more than 12%, sell enough units to take out to returns above 12% and invest that money in regular fixed deposits.

This amount can be used to buy units in the years when your equity investment earns lower than the expected return. This process improves your chances to accumulate the required amount at the end of the time horizon for a life goal.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals for managing their personal investments)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	6.35	8.00	7.20
Capital Small Finance Bank	7.60	7.15	7.15	7.10
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.20	7.70	7.75	7.00
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.10	6.00	5.75	5.25
Fincare Small Finance Bank	8.11	7.25	7.00	7.00
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.15	7.25	8.10	7.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.51	6.85	7.25	7.50
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.25	6.50	7.20	7.20
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.26	6.75	7.00	7.00
Bandhan Bank	8.00	7.25	7.25	5.85
CSB Bank	7.50	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	7.50	6.25	6.50	6.50
DCB Bank	8.00	7.25	7.60	7.60
HDFC Bank	7.10	6.60	7.00	7.00
ICICI Bank	7.10	6.70	7.00	7.00
IDFC First Bank	7.75	6.75	7.75	7.00
IndusInd Bank	7.50	7.00	7.50	7.25
J &K Bank	7.25	7.25	6.50	6.50
Karnataka Bank	7.50	7.00	5.75	5.75
Karur Vysya Bank	7.50	7.00	7.00	6.25
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.20	7.00	6.50	6.20
Nainital Bank	7.05	6.60	6.25	5.75
RBL Bank	7.80	7.00	7.00	7.00
SBM Bank India	7.75	7.05	7.30	7.75
South Indian Bank	7.40	6.60	6.50	6.00
TMB	8.00	7.25	6.50	6.50
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.05	6.75	6.75	6.25
Bank of India	7.05	6.00	6.50	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	7.00	6.25	6.00	5.75
Canara Bank	7.15	6.75	6.50	6.50
Central Bank of India	7.55	6.75	6.25	6.25
Indian Bank	7.10*	6.10	6.25	6.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.00	6.45	6.50	6.50
Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.80	7.00	6.50
State Bank of India	7.10	6.80	6.50	6.50
Union Bank of India	7.30	6.30	7.30	6.70
Foreign Banks				
Deutsche Bank	7.75	7.00	7.75	7.50
HSBC Bank	7.50	4.00	7.00	6.00

*7.15% p.a. interest rate for women depositors

Source:Paisabazaar.com

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
			(In %)
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India*	8.50-10.15	8.50-10.05	8.50-10.05
Bank of Baroda	8.50-10.65	8.50-10.65	8.50-10.90
Union Bank of India	8.75-10.75	8.75-10.95	8.85-10.95
Punjab National Bank	8.65-9.60	8.60-9.50	8.60-9.50
Bank of India	8.85-10.85	8.85-10.85	8.85-10.85
Canara Bank	8.85-11.25	8.85-11.25	8.85-11.25
UCO Bank	8.85-10.40	8.85-10.40	8.85-10.40
Punjab and Sind Bank	8.95-9.95	8.95-9.95	8.95-9.95
Indian Overseas Bank	9.55-10.95	8.85 onwards	8.85 onwards
Indian Bank	8.45-10.40	8.45-10.40	8.45-10.40
Central Bank of India	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.85 onwards	8.85 onwards	8.85 onwards
ICICI Bank	9.00-9.80	9.00-9.95	9.00-10.05
Axis Bank	8.75-12.70	8.75-12.70	8.75-9.15
HSBC Bank	8.60 onwards	8.60 onwards	8.60 onwards
South Indian Bank	9.85-12.60	9.85-12.60	9.85-12.60
Karur Vysya Bank	9.23-12.13	9.23-12.13	9.23-12.13
Karnataka Bank	9.08-10.25	9.08-10.25	9.08-10.35
Federal Bank	10.15-10.20	10.20-10.25	10.25-10.30
Dhanlaxmi Bank	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	9.10-9.60	9.10-9.60	9.10-9.60
Bandhan Bank	8.65-14.00	8.65-14.00	8.65-14.00
RBL Bank	9.15-11.55	9.10-11.30	9.10-11.30
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.45-10.10	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.50
HDFC Ltd.	8.50-10.35	8.50-10.60	8.50-10.70
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.70 onwards	8.70 onwards	8.70 onwards
Tata Capital	8.95 onwards	8.95 onwards	8.95 onwards
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-13.00	8.50-10.85
GIC Housing Finance	8.45 onwards	8.45 onwards	8.45 onwards
Repco Home Finance	9.40 onwards	9.40 onwards	9.40 onwards
Indiabulls Housing	9.30 onwards	9.30 onwards	9.30 onwards
Aditya Birla Capital	8.80-14.75	8.80-14.75	8.80-14.75
ICICI Home Finance	9.20 onwards	9.20 onwards	9.20 onwards

*Concession of 0.10% on the applicable interest rates for Shaurya and Shaurya Flexi Home Loans

Rates as on March 16

Source:Paisabazaar.com

LANKA IN DISARRAY

New Zealand scents victory despite Karunaratne's twin fifties

Sri Lanka trailed New Zealand by 303 runs with eight second innings wickets left after following on, on the third day of the second Test in Wellington.
The scores: NZ 580/4 decl. vs SL 164 in 66.5 overs (Karunaratne 89) & 113/2 in 43 overs (Kusal Mendis 50 batting, Karunaratne 51).

ON THE PODIUM

Jehan Daruvala roars to third place in the sprint race

India's Jehan Daruvala raced to his 16th Formula 2 podium with a third-place finish in the sprint race of the championship's Saudi Arabian round in Jeddah on Saturday. The MP Motorsport driver started fifth, but dropped to third just three laps from the end after making a daring bid for the lead.

CROWNING GLORY

An and Li take the singles honours at All England Open badminton

South Korea's An Se Young beat Olympic champion Chen Yu Fei of China 21-17, 10-21, 21-19 to the win the women's singles title at the All England Open badminton championships in Birmingham on Sunday. Li Shi Feng beat fellow Chinese Shi Yu Qi 26-24, 21-5, to claim the men's crown.

REIGNING SUPREME

Advani retains Asian billiards title with facile win over Damani

Pankaj Advani defeated compatriot Brijesh Damani 5-1 [100(51)-18, 100(88)-9, 86-(54)-101(75), 100(100)-26, 100(66)-2, 101(64)-59] to retain his title in the Asian billiards championship in Doha on Sunday. S. Shrikrishna, who lost to Damani 5-4 in the semifinals on Saturday, claimed a bronze.

Starc scythes through India top-order

The left-arm pacer finishes with figures of five for 53 as the home team suffers the biggest defeat in ODIs in terms of balls remaining; Australia levels series after chasing down the paltry target of 118 in 11 overs with openers Marsh and Head making aggressive, unbeaten half-centuries

AUSTRALIA IN INDIA

S. Dipak Ragav
VISAKHAPATNAM

From Saturday afternoon until a few hours before the start of the match on Sunday, the city of Visakhapatnam had been receiving persistent rains, and there were even doubts about whether a complete game was possible.

Thankfully for the capacity crowd at the Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Stadium, the sun came out just in time to get the second ODI going as scheduled.

From then on, Mitchell Starc (five for 53) ensured that even if there were a threat of rain later in the day, it would not matter much as he blew the India batting line-up away in just about two and a half hours.

The left-arm pacer produced a fine display of swing bowling to shoot out the hosts for just 117, setting up a thumping ten-wicket win for Australia.

Chasing a modest target, openers Mitchell Marsh (66 n.o., 36b, 6x4, 6x6) and Travis Head (51 n.o., 30b, 10x4) flayed the Indian bowling attack with disdain as Australia romped home in style in just 11 overs to level the three-match series 1-1.

On a pitch that was under cover till about a few hours before the start, Aussie skipper Steve Smith had no hesitation in bowling first after winning the toss.

King of swing: Starc carried too much firepower for Rohit's men and set up a thumping win. K.R. DEEPAK

The sweating under the covers would have left enough moisture to assist the pacers, and the Australian attack made full use of it, needing only 26 overs to bowl out the Men in Blue.

India's struggle against quality left-arm swing bowling stood exposed again as Starc ran through the top order like a hot knife through butter.

The 33-year-old struck off the third ball of the innings when Shubman Gill went for a big drive, playing away from his body and hitting it straight to the point fielder. Skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli started well with a few boundaries, while Starc struggled to find his rhythm.

In the fifth over, the tall left-arm seamer hit his stride and removed Rohit and Suryakumar Yadav off successive deliveries. Starc found Rohit's edge when the India skipper went for a drive on the up, with Smith taking a good catch after fumbling initially at first slip.

Off the next ball, in a carbon copy of his dismissal from Mumbai, Suryakumar was trapped plumb in front to a delivery that swung and seamed into the right-hander at a ferocious pace.

K.L. Rahul too was out leg before off Starc as the ball moved in sharply into him, and India was reduced to 39 for four in the ninth over.

Nathan Ellis – who came in for Glenn Maxwell – accounted for Kohli, who looked fine until he played across to a full delivery before the bowler had Ravindra Jadeja caught behind.

Abbott chips in

Sean Abbott chipped in with three wickets, including that off Hardik Pandya, caught brilliantly by Smith one-handed while diving full stretch at first slip.

Fittingly, Starc finished the Indian innings when he breached Mohammed Siraj's defence to take his ninth five-wicket haul in ODIs and hand India its biggest defeat in ODIs in terms of balls remaining.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
Rohit Sharma c Smith b Starc 13 *(15b, 2x4)*, Shubman Gill c Labuschagne b Starc 0 *(2b)*, Virat Kohli lbw b Ellis 31 *(35b, 4x4)*, Suryakumar Yadav lbw b Starc 0 *(1b)*, K.L. Rahul lbw b Starc 9 *(12b, 1x4)*, Hardik Pandya c Smith b Abbott 1 *(3b)*, Ravindra Jadeja c Carey b Ellis 16 *(39b, 1x4)*, Axar Patel (not out) 29 *(29b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Kuldeep Yadav c Head b Abbott 4 *(17b)*, Mohammed Shami c Carey b Abbott 0 *(1b)*, Mohammed Siraj b Starc 0 *(3b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-11, nb-1): 14; Total (in 26 overs): 117.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-3 (Gill, 0.3 overs), 2-32 (Rohit, 4.4), 3-32 (Suryakumar, 4.5), 4-48 (Rahul, 8.4), 5-49 (Hardik, 9.2), 6-71 (Kohli, 15.2), 7-91 (Jadeja, 19.3), 8-103 (Kuldeep, 24.4), 9-103 (Shami, 24.5).

AUSTRALIA BOWLING
Starc 8-1-53-5, Green 5-0-20-0, Abbott 6-0-23-3, Ellis 5-0-13-2, Zampa 2-0-6-0.

AUSTRALIA
Travis Head (not out) 51 *(30b, 10x4)*, Mitchell Marsh (not out) 66 *(36b, 6x4, 6x6)*; Extras (w-4): 4; Total (for no loss in 11 overs): 121.

INDIA BOWLING
Shami 3-0-29-0, Siraj 3-0-37-0, Axar 3-0-25-0, Hardik 1-0-18-0, Kuldeep 1-0-12-0.
Toss: Australia; **PoM:** Starc.
Australia won by 10 wickets with 39 overs remaining to level series 1-1.
Third and final ODI: March 22, Chennai, 1.30 p.m.

'We failed to handle the situation well'

S. Dipak Ragav
VISAKHAPATNAM

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma made no excuses about his side's shambolic batting performance against Australia on Sunday.

"We didn't bat well enough. That wasn't a pitch where we could have gotten out for 117," said Rohit. "We didn't apply ourselves. Even when you lose a couple of wickets early, it is crucial to create that partnership so that you can get back into the game. Yeah, that's about it. I don't think we batted well enough," he added.

Siraj is bowled neck and crop by Starc. K.R. DEEPAK

Nothing to panic

Though the top-order has failed to get going in the first two matches of this series, the captain refused to press the panic button.

"It has just been two games. The top order was on fire for our last six ODIs. So, not too much of a concern at all."

"Our guys have enough experience. All the guys who played today have played a lot of ODIs, so it is about handling the situation well, and that is something we failed today," Rohit explained.

Meanwhile, the Player-of-the-match, Mitchell Starc, felt the wickets in the PowerPlay set up the game for his side.

"(It was) a complete bowling performance from us; the fact that we took wickets in the PowerPlay allowed us to attack even more at the backend of the PowerPlay and throughout the innings. Likewise, with a lower total chase, you can afford to be aggressive through the PowerPlay and Mitch (Marsh), and Travis (Head) came off well with bat," said Starc who took the first four wickets.

Explaining his bowling style and plans, Starc said, "My role for a long time is to try and take wickets upfront in the PowerPlay, and that means that I tend to bowl a full length compared to other guys like Cameron Green or others in the squad.

"So, yeah, that means I am probably more expensive at times, but I'm trying to bring in all modes of dismissal."

Perez wins Saudi Arabian GP; Verstappen jumps to second

Lights out to flag: Red Bull's Perez was in cruise mode from start to finish at Jeddah. AFP

FORMULA ONE

Reuters
JEDDAH

Mexican Sergio Perez won the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix from pole position for Red Bull on Sunday as double world champion teammate Max Verstappen raced to second from 15th place.

Verstappen snatched the fastest lap around Jeddah's floodlit Corniche circuit right at the end to retain the Formula One championship lead by a single point.

The result was Red Bull's second one-two in as many races this season but a reverse of the March 5 opener in Bahrain won by Verstappen.

Russell third

Mercedes' George Russell was third after Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso was given a 10-second time penalty.

The results:
1. Perez (Red Bull); 2. Verstappen (Red Bull) +5.355; 3. Russell (Mercedes) 25.866; 4. Alonso (Aston Martin) 30.728; 5. Hamilton (Mercedes) 31.065; 6. Sainz (Ferrari) 35.876; 7. Leclerc (Ferrari) 43.162; 8. Ocon (Alpine) 52.832; 9. Gasly (Alpine) 54.747; 10. Magnussen (Haas) 64.826.

11. Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) 67.494; 12. Hulkenberg (Haas) 70.588; 13. Zhou (Alfa Romeo) 76.060; 14. de Vries (AlphaTauri) 77.478; 15. Piastri (McLaren) 85.021; 16. Sargeant (Williams) 86.293; 17. Norris (McLaren) 86.445.

+1 lap: 18. Bottas (Alfa Romeo); **DNF:** Albon (Williams); Stroll (Aston Martin).

Standings (top-5): Drivers: 1. Verstappen 44; 2. Perez 43; 3. Alonso 27; 4. Sainz 20; 5. Hamilton 20; **Constructors:** 1. Red Bull 87; 2. Mercedes 41; 3. Aston Martin 35; 4. Ferrari 26; 5. Alpine 8.

On the double: Palacios got it right from the spot twice. AFP

Palacios' strikes leave Bayern stunned

EURO LEAGUES

Agencies
BERLIN

Argentina's World Cup winner Exequiel Palacios struck twice from the spot as Bayer Leverkusen blew the Bundesliga race wide open with a 2-1 win over Bayern Munich on Sunday.

Arsenal moved eight points clear in the Premier League table after Bukayo Saka scored twice in a 4-1 win over Crystal Palace.

Important results: Premier League: Sunday: Arsenal 4 (Martinelli 28, Saka 43, Xhaka 55, Saka 74) Crystal Palace 1 (Schlupp 63). **Saturday:** Brentford 1 (Jensen 32) drew with Leicester 1 (Barnes 52); Chelsea 2 (Felix 52, Havertz 76-pen) drew with Everton 2 (Doucoure 69, Simms 89); Southampton 3 (Adams 46, Walcott 77, Ward-Prowse 90+3-pen) drew with Tottenham 3 (Porro 45+1, Kane 65, Perisic 74).

Serie A: Sunday: Torino 0 lost to Napoli 4 (Osimhen 9, 51, Kvaratskhelia 35-pen, Ndombele 68).**Saturday:** Udinese 3 (Pereyra 9, Beto 45+6, Ehizibue 70) bt AC Milan 1 (Ibrahimovic 45+4-pen).

LaLiga: Saturday: Atletico Madrid 3 (Griezmann 23, Carrasco 49, Lemar 67) bt Valencia 0.

Bundesliga: Sunday: Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Palacios 55-pen, 73-pen) bt Bayern 1 (Kimmich 22); Union Berlin 2 (Khedira 53, Behrens 75) bt Frankfurt 0. **Saturday:** Borussia Dortmund 6 (Guerreiro 15, Haller 17, 69, Reus 32, 70, Malen 36) bt Cologne 1 (Selke 42).

Nikhat posts a hard-fought win over top seed Boualam

BOXING WORLDS

Y.B. Sarangi
NEW DELHI

Seeking another title in a different weight category, Nikhat Zareen, the 52kg World champion, overcame top seed Roumaysa Boualam of Algeria in a hard-fought 50kg second round bout at the World women's boxing championships at the K.D. Jadhav Hall here on Sunday.

Following Nikhat's 5-0 victory over African and Mediterranean Games champion Roumaysa, Manisha Moun (57kg) got off the block nicely by posting a convincing 5-0 win over Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Tina Rahimi to make it a perfect day for the sparse home fans thronging the venue.

Nikhat, who began cautiously, hit the target to prevail over her aggressive opponent in the opening round, which saw the trading of punches in the first-ever meeting between the two.

Even as Roumaysa continued to attack and conceded a caution point in the process, Nikhat executed her counters well to take the second round by a slender margin.

Take that! Nikhat, left, began cautiously before taking the battle to Boualam. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Nikhat maintained a safe distance and continued to land scoring punches in the third round to set up a pre-quarterfinal date with Mexico's Fatima Herrera Alvarez in a rematch of last edition's Round of 32 bout.

Manisha, a bronze medallist of the previous edition, displayed her lovely ring craft and movement to control the bout and gain ground through her accuracy. A good assortment of jabs and combinations helped Manisha sail smoothly to the last 16, where she would face Turkey's Elifnur Turhan.

Important results (preliminary rounds): 50kg: Nikhat Zareen bt Roumaysa (Alg) 5-0, Caroline de Almeida (Bra) bt Yana Burym (Blr) 5-0; Giordana Sorrentino (Ita) bt Ekaterina Paltseva (Rus) 4-1; Laura Fernandez (Esp) bt Mugunsarang Balsan (Mgl) 4-3; Tam Thi Nguyen (Vie) bt Nazym Kyzaibay (Kaz) 5-0; Anush Grigoryan (Arm) bt Chorong Bak (Kor) 5-2; Wassila Lkhadiri (Fra) bt Tsukimi Namiki (Jpn) 4-3.

57kg: Irma Testa (Ita) bt Leilany Moreno (Gua) 4-1; Ashleyann Motta (Pur) bt Zichun Xu (Chn) 4-3; Manisha Moun bt Tina Rahimi (Aus) 5-0.

INBRIEF

Medvedev sets up summit clash with Alcaraz

Carlos Alcaraz defeated Jannik Sinner 7-6(4), 6-3 on Saturday to advance to the BNP Paribas Open final against Daniil Medvedev in the ATP tournament in Indian Wells (USA). Medvedev beat Frances Tiafoe 7-5, 7-6(4) on his eighth match point for his 19th consecutive match victory of the year.

The results: Men: Semifinals: Alcaraz bt Sinner 7-6(4), 6-3; Medvedev bt Tiafoe 7-5, 7-6(4).

Vikash, Paramjeet qualify for 2024 Olympics, 2023 Worlds

India's 20km race walkers Vikash Singh and Paramjeet Singh Bisht qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics as well as the 2023 World championships during the Asian Championships here on Sunday. Vikash and Paramjeet finished second and third in the men's Open category of the Asian 20km race walking championships, clocking 1:20:05 and 1:20:08 respectively, behind Qian Haifeng (1:19:09) of China. The qualifying mark for both the 2024 Paris Olympics and 2023 World Athletics Championships in August in Budapest is 1:20:10.

Kotal and Mahesh added to national football camp

The Indian football team head coach Igor Stimac on Sunday called up Pritam Kotal and Naorem Mahesh Singh to the national camp in Kolkata in place of N. Sivasakthi and Glan Martins, who are nursing injuries. The camp began on Thursday in preparation for the upcoming tri-nation International tournament in Imphal, where it is set to face Myanmar (March 22) and Kyrgyz Republic (March 28).

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs Ireland: 2nd ODI, FanCode, 1.30 p.m.
WPL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 3.30 & 7.30 p.m.
New Zealand vs Sri Lanka: 2nd Test, day 5, Prime Video, 3.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Bopanna is oldest Masters champion

The 43-year-old joins hands with Ebden to outlast top seeds Koolhof and Skupski in a thrilling summit clash at Indian Wells; the Indian eclipses the record of Nestor who was 42 when he won at Cincinnati in 2015; the Indo-Aussie duo has won two titles in three finals this season

TENNIS

Sports Bureau

Rohan Bopanna became the oldest tennis player ever to win the Masters 1000 title, as he and Matthew Ebden of Australia beat the top seeds Wesley Koolhof and Neal Skupski 6-3, 2-6, [10-8] in the doubles final of the $10,143,750 ATP tournament in Indian Wells, USA.

The 43-year-old Bopanna broke the record of Daniel Nestor of Canada who had won the Cincinnati Masters title in 2015 when he was 42.

Smash hit: Bopanna, right, and Ebden had the last laugh in the Indian Wells final. AP

Texting Dan

"Dan is a close friend. I texted that I had broken his record," said Bopanna, who had won two of his 24 doubles titles on the Tour with Nestor, incidentally in 2015 itself.

"I was able to keep my tennis going, and I still believe that I could win the big tournaments. Constantly finding ways to improve. The last four weeks have been fantastic," said Bopanna.

Bopanna and Ebden have won two titles from three finals this season, and had match point in the final of Rotterdam.

"Nice to see the Indian flag here," said Bopanna, who won his fifth Masters title in 10 finals.

The previous one was in Monte Carlo in 2017 with Pablo Cuevas.

The former World No. 3, Bopanna will get closer to the top-10, as he attempts to build on the momentum, in the next Masters event in Miami.

"When we chose to partner, Matt and me wanted to win the ATP 500, 1000 titles," said Bopanna, who showed that he was capable of doing well at the Grand Slams too.

Bopanna had played his part in helping Sania Mirza sign off with a flourish by reaching the mixed doubles summit clash at the Australian Open earlier this year.

The Indian Wells title was worth 1000 ATP points and $436,730.

Ageless wonder

1 Indian Wells was Bopanna's first ATP Masters 1000 trophy since the 2017 Monte Carlo Masters, and fifth overall

11 Bopanna's current ranking of 11 is his highest since July 10, 2016

24 The Indian Wells triumph was Bopanna's 24th Tour-level doubles title

43 At 43, Bopanna passed Daniel Nestor to become the oldest ATP Masters 1000 finalist and beat the Canadian to emerge the oldest champion

Devine's blitz turns back the clock to McCullum's inaugural IPL knock

WPL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI

It should come as no surprise that Brendon McCullum is the biggest influence on Sophie Devine. "He has been an inspiration not just for me, but for the entire New Zealand," she had told *The Hindu* during an interview once. "He is aggressive from ball one, regardless of the situation."

And, on Saturday night at the Brabourne Stadium, she played an innings that reminded cricket fans of a sensational knock her idol played a decade-and-a-half ago. McCullum's 158 not out off 73 balls in 2008 had given the inaugural edition of the IPL a dream start. He had played that blinder for Kolkata Knight Riders against Royal Challengers Bangalore. Devine's 99 off 36 balls came for RCB, against Gujarat Giants in the Women's Premier League.

In her hero's footsteps: McCullum has been an inspiration not just for her, but for the entire New Zealand, says Devine. SPORTZPICS/WPL

Among those fine performances that were eclipsed by Devine's stunning effort was Giants opener Laura Wolvaardt's elegant 68 (42b). Sophie just played on a different planet today" the South African opener said.

She took 24 off the innings' second over, bowled by Ashleigh Gardner, the Australian off-spinning all-rounder who is on top of her game at the moment (she was the player of the tournament at the T20 World Cup last month in South Africa).

"She has been a bully to a lot of other people over the years and I think it is only fair that she has got a bit of her own back," smiled Devine, a woman with a nice sense of humour.

"Cricket can be just a funny game as you do exactly the same every day and sometimes you get performances like this," she said.

Monday's matches: Gujarat Giants vs UP Warriorz (3.30 p.m.); Mumbai Indians v Delhi Capitals (7.30 p.m.)

AIFF's plans to improve competition in the SAFF championship

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) is keen to invite one or two nations from outside the South Asian region to compete in the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship later this year.

AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey stated that getting a couple of higher-ranked teams will improve the competition in the tournament. India has traditionally dominated the tournament, winning eight of the 13 editions held so far.

"This year, we want to include one or two teams from outside the SAFF region. This will create more competition for the Indian team. Having higher-ranked teams in the tournament will raise the standard of Indian football. We are in discussion with stakeholders, and we will announce our decision in May," Chaubey stated in a press conference here on Sunday. The tournament will be held in Bengaluru from June 21 to July 3.

Asked if Pakistan will be allowed to compete in the tournament, Chaubey said, "We will abide by the decision of the Ministry of External Affairs. However, we want to welcome all participating teams. We do not want to mix politics and sports," Chaubey said.

AIFF secretary-general Shaji Prabhakaran, AIFF vice-president and Karnataka State Football Association president N.A. Haris, and Karnataka Olympic Association president K. Govindraj were present at the press conference.

PSPB men favourite; its women could be challenged by RBI

SENIOR NATL. TT

K. Keerthivasan
JAMMU

The Gymnasium Hall at Jammu University will host the Senior National table tennis championships after a gap of almost 25 years. Then, Chetan Baboor (PSPB) went on to win a hat-trick of men's singles titles while Kasturi Chakraborty (PSPB) clinched her maiden women's crown. In the team event, PSPB and Bengal bagged the men's and women's titles.

Cut to 2023, the 84th edition of the UTT-Senior Nationals, beginning here on Monday, will likely witness the domination of PSPB in singles and team events.

All the top paddlers including defending champions, Sharath Kamal (men) and Sreeja Akula (women), G. Sathiyan, Harmeet Desai, Manav Thakkar, two-time champions Manika Batra, Sutirtha Mukherjee, comeback queen Mouma Das, Reeth Rishya, Diya Chitale, Archana Kamath will participate.

While PSPB, comprising Sharath, Sathiyan, Harmeet, Manav and Sanil Shetty, will be the favourite in the men's section, a hard battle is expected in the women's. Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the top seed, comprising Sreeja, Diya and Ayhika Muherjee, among others, could challenge PSPB.

Recently, the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) took a policy decision on one-State-one-unit as per the Sports Code.

Curiously, the TTFI has allowed Rajasthan to field two teams under its banner, TTFI1 and TTFI2, owing to some problems, reportedly in-fighting.

Groupings:
Men: I: PSPB, TTFI2, Andhra Pradesh, Manipur; **II:** RSPB, Sikkim, Nagaland, Punjab; **III:** Delhi, Ladakh, Kerala, TTFI1; **IV:** Haryana, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Chhattisgarh; **V:** West Bengal, MP, Arunachal Pradesh; Andaman & Nicobar; **VI:** Telangana, Karnataka; Bihar, J&K; **VII:** Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Daman & Diu; HP; **VIII:** UP, TN, Chandigarh, Odisha, Assam.
Women: I: RBI, J&K, TTFI1, Goa; **II:** PSPB, Punjab, UP, Kerala; **III:** West Bengal, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Chandigarh; **IV:** MP, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh; **VI:** Delhi, Telangana, TTFI1, Ladakh; **VII:** Gujarat, Haryana, Haryana, Jharkhand, Manipur; **VIII:** TN, Karnataka, Daman & Diu, Uttarakhand.

Tabuena edges out Rashid to take the honours

DGC OPEN

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

Just when it appeared Rashid Khan had the DGC Open title firmly secured in his hip-pocket, Miguel Tabuena picked it.

The dramatic twist to the finale of the $750,000 event came after Tabuena's birdies on the 15th and 16th holes coincided with Rashid's bogeys on the 15th and 17th holes.

Minutes later, Tabuena's stunning 7-under 65 for a 12-under 276 proved enough to fetch him $135,000. An exasperated Rashid, who aggregated 277, collected $82,500 after paying heavily for those late errors in judgement.

If Rashid managed to avoid sharing the second spot with Thailand's Chapchai Nirat, it was due to the final-hole birdie, after missing an unlikely eagle-putt needed to force a playoff with Tabuena.

Moments after Rashid missed his eagle-putt, a relieved Tabuena celebrated his first title on the Asian Tour in five years with a quick video call to his wife.

Tabuena. ASIAN TOUR

> I've played several times on this course and I know that one has to be patient here.
> TABUENA

For the better part of Sunday, Rashid stayed at least two shots ahead after starting the round with a three-stroke lead.

Turning point

The turning point was Tabeuna's back-nine 32 dotted with birdies on the 10th, 12th, 15th and 16th holes that saw him catch up with Rashid at 12-under. Within minutes, Rashid dropped a shot on the 15th to lose his lead for the first time.

He went on to bogey the par-3 17th after landing his tee-shot in the greenside bunker and failing to reach the green with his second shot. Rashid two-putted, much to the relief of a nervous Tabuena who watched the action on the TV screen in the scoring room.

"I was solid off the tee and with my iron-play," said the champion while reflecting on his final round. "I've played several times on this course and I know that one has to be patient here. All week, I did not shoot an over-par score. I really played well."

Final scores: 276: Miguel Tabuena (Phi) (68, 71, 72, 65); **277:** Rashid Khan (67, 70, 68, 72); **278:** Champchai Nirat (Tha) (68, 71, 71, 68); **280:** S. Chikkarangappa (68, 66, 74, 72); **281:** S.S.P. Chawrasia (72, 70, 71, 68); **282:** Suteepat Prateeptienchai (Tha) (70, 71, 72, 69), Gaganjeet Bhullar (74, 71, 72, 69), Om Prakash Chouhan (69, 68, 73, 72) and Honey Baisoya (71, 74, 65, 72).

Gill corners glory in second round of Asia Rally Cup

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

India's Gaurav Gill did just enough to win the second round of the FIA-Asia Pacific Rally Championship (Asia Rally Cup) at the Madras Motor Sports Club (MMSC) here on Sunday.

The South India Rally concluded with two of the four special stages being called off due to heavy overnight rains rendering the Madras International Circuit (MIC) track waterlogged and unmotorable.

Reflecting on his performance, Gill said: "I am very relieved as it was a mentally very taxing weekend. There were niggles with my car that went on forever, and I am happy to bring it back home safely."

Mangaluru's Aroor Arjun Rao (Satish Rajagopal) took the overall title in the Blueband Sports FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship – his first win in seven years.

On top: Gill and co-driver Aniruddha celebrate their victory in the second round. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Provisional classifications:
FIA-APRC (Asia Rally Cup): 1. Gaurav Gill & Aniruddha Rangnekar (1hr, 50mins, 23secs); 2. Mana Pornsiricherd & Thanyaphat Meenil (1:51:12); 3. Amittrajit Ghosh & Ashwin Naik (1:58:44).
Overall INRC: 1. Aroor Arjun Rao & Satish Rajagopal (1:55:26.6); 2. Daraius Shroff & Shahid Salman (1:58:11.1); 3. Sheshank Jamwal & Aseem Sharma (1:58:30.1).
INRC-2: 1. Sahil Khanna & Harish Gowda (2:01:38.9); 2. Charen Chandran & Vignesh Mahalingam (2:15:29.4); 3. Harikrishan Wadia & B.K. Rishabh (2:16:53.8).
INRC-3: 1. Daraius Shroff & Shahid Salman (1:58:11.1); 2. Sheshank Jamwal & Aseem Sharma (1:58:30.1); 3. Vishakh Balachandran & Anil Abbas (1:59:29.8). **INRC-4:** 1. Abhin Rai & D. Uday Kumar (2:04:48.5); 2. K.V. Dheeraj & Pramod Raman (2:07:51.2); 3. Arun Mohan & K.R. Rishikesh (2:45:44.9).
Junior INRC: 1. Arjun Rajiv & Rohit Gowda (2:00:13.2); 2. Arnav Pratap Singh & S.S.B. Arjun (2:00:50.6); 3. Jahaan Singh Gill & Suraj Keshava Prasad (2:01:04.9).
Ladies Cup (Open): 1. Pragathi Gowda & Trisha Alonkar (1:59:58.5); 2. Shivani Parmar & G. Sanath (2:20:12.4).
FMSCI Gypsy Challenge: 1. Samrat Yadav & Arvind Dheerendra (2:03:12.1); 2. Darshan Nachappa & Abhinav Ganapathy (2:09:35.8); 3. Baljinder Singh Dhillon & C.P. Goutham (2:15:26.4).